THE IRISH IN NINETEENTH CENTURY COVENTRY

Two Volumes

Volume 1

Thomas Joseph Prendergast

A thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
Ulster University
in fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

School of Arts & Humanities

April 2019

I confirm that the word count of this thesis
is less than 100,000 words

Contents

Volume 1

Volume 2

Appendices

Tables

Figures

Maps

Acknowledgements

It has been my great privilege to have as my supervisor Dr Kyle Hughes. I owe him a deep debt of gratitude for the unfailing interest and respect he showed to me and to my study perspective. His continued encouragement and belief in me, together with his invaluable advice, assistance, courtesy and friendliness, helped bring this work calmly to fruition.

I would like to express my thanks to the School of Arts and Humanities at Ulster University, in particular its Research Director - History, Professor Ian Thatcher, who provided the opportunity for me to engage in this research and who offered me encouragement.

Also I want to acknowledge my appreciation of the migrants who are the subject of this study, in what they have shown to me about the nature of resilience. These family oriented people were to be found across the social spectrum. Some became pillars of society but many were located towards its severe social exclusionary end. In a harsh, judgemental condescending century marked by oppressive social division, many Irish endured poverty and marginalisation. They faced brusque dislike, suspicion and lurking prejudice. They coped remarkably in spite of their initial distance from the cultural mainstream, their lack of formal education, skills and social graces, and their own behavioural flaws. In this statistical casting and theoretical emplacement of the Coventry Irish I hope I was mindful that I was writing about a complex people whose response while they resided in an ancient city, with an especially tolerant character and variability of fortune, was more than the sum of their demographic aggregations. Also that I have called attention to their personal experiences which were more individual, and their decisions less predictable than standard migrant accounts of the Irish in Britain may infer. That said, perhaps my reaction might have been similar to that of Dr. Alison Light who when researching her own ancestors for her book *Common People* remarked that she would not have liked some of them much if she had met them.

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of librarians or archivists in London, Coventry, Birmingham and Dublin.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to sincerely thank Maureen, Ann and James, who truly know what completion of this study has meant to me, for their unsparing kindness and unflinching support.

Abstract

This study sets out to investigate the impact and implication of a discreet quantum of Irish, responding to nineteenth century urban life, in a small sized city, which had not been inundated by a disproportionate influx of Irish-born from the later 1840s. It seeks to understand if the response in such circumstances might vary from the historical migrant narrative developed around large post-Famine volumes in substantial municipalities. It is centred on Coventry which it is suggested represented the 'ordinary' small city and the quintessential 'county' type town. Its compact physical size and attainable censual continuity of coverage for a determinate area over many decades provides ideal investigative conditions. There is scrutiny of all eight censuses that enumerated the Irish; which permits the nature of generational transition to be revealed. It furnishes data for both Irish-born and for all those it deems to have an Irish association within a household framework; the latter in an attempt to embody a 'community'. The provision of dual data sets permits the relationship between these two denotations of Irish to be assessed. These findings are compared with household information attained for every household in the entire city for 1851 and 1881. The opportunity provided by this smaller canvas is taken to examine the characteristics of selected families or individuals, not necessarily part of the dominant 'Celtic Catholic' grouping.

Findings contribute to the view that the experience of migrants varied in different cities. For Coventry an especial response was prompted by its benign municipal character and fluctuating prosperity, volume of Irish migrants and their heterogeneous background. An interplay of factors influenced migrant adjustment and shaped settlement pattern. Migrants were neither seriously segregated, nor placed in a defensive stance. Subsequent generations, while conscious of their heritage, were found on the path towards integration by end of century.

Introduction

This introduction shall consist of three sections. First, it will introduce Coventry as the urban setting and the Irish who chose it as their place of residence. It will employ the expedient of outlining the likely perspective of a visitor traversing the city in 1841 in order to ground the study in the lived experience of the century. The second section will proffer the aim of the study, and will assert the benefits to be gained from the completion of this investigation. It will justify the usefulness of Coventry as a case study of the Irish in a smaller urban area during the nineteenth century. It will recommend the examination in that sized setting, of a relatively small scale Irish settlement that did not continue in the long term, mainly through, initially low and thereafter restricted volume of arrivers, as a culturally distinct community. It will lay out the value of surveying Irish migrants over a century, enabling capture of the bloom and fade of successive generations. The objectives involved in accomplishing the aim will be distinguished, and the approach outlined that will be adopted, e.g. framing the analysis in a household setting, to fulfil these goals. Finally, it will set out how the remainder of the thesis is organised so that the aim and objectives are dealt with in an ordered fashion.

Introduction

The frame through which the past is observed is not assisted by the fabric of Coventry city centre today. The layout, width and direction of historic core streets can still be distinguished where not reshaped as pedestrianised routes and plazas. However the houses, shops and buildings that once lined them, many of medieval appearance that rivalled York have been tragically lost.[1] This occurred through the thoughtless, if well meaning 'improvement' of pre-World War II clearance, demolition by aerial bombing and post-World War II reconstruction. The once appropriately scaled residential and retail function of these streets has been lost to office blocks and commercial buildings, if not equally bland in appearance then clashing in style, or lost to stark impersonal albeit landscaped open space. From last mid-century, planning was future orientated - modernity for modernity's sake.[2] Searby remarked in the forward looking spirit of 1972 'the city is now totally dominated by structures in the modern idiom…they break utterly with the past: concrete celebrations of civic panache, modern urban planning, and the

[1] J.B. Priestley, *English Journey*, (London 1934) p. 69. He referred to the city as 'genuinely old and picturesque'.
[2] David Kynaston, Modernity Britain: A Shake of the Dice, 1959-62. He outlined his views in *The Sunday Telegraph* 14th September 2014.

pride of giant enterprise.[3] Now, however, in the city centre, the once conceptually stylish pedestrianised shopping precinct presents as a tired architectural project from the 1950s and it currently incorporates over-styled architecture from the 1990s. Walters remarked 'its pioneering Festival of Britain architecture, so widely admired in the post-war years, has managed to overshadow Coventry's remaining heritage in wood and stone and somehow erase the collective memories of the place'.[4] Environmental evidence of domestic and industrial production around the silk, and watch staple trades which gave in their heydays economic strength, employment, and an especial character to the Victorian city has largely disappeared.[5] Activity in these trades which Harper said brought a 'fugitive prosperity' was in turn eclipsed by a later 19th and 20th century industrial renaissance based on bicycle and automobile assembly. Together with post-World War II rebuilding and residential development this attracted its own substantial Irish migrant influx in the prosperous 'golden age' of the 1950s and 60s.[6] Since then the economic pendulum has swung towards decline and again towards recovery.[7] Urban redevelopment has included the ubiquitous Inner Ring Road, commenced in 1958, brutalist in design, with a pervading bleakness beneath its stilts, which has both defined and isolated the central area.[8] Hill Street is an example of a street that it has severed. It previously had purpose as a radial artery extending from the city centre to the outskirts, and along which city Catholics could travel to reach St. Osburg's church.[9] Many Irish lived in streets just off the city centre; parts of these streets, e.g. Greyfriars Lane, due to their convenient access to the centre, now serve as car parks. Following much municipal boundary extension since 1890, the mid-nineteenth century city area which is the focus of this study appears as a nucleus that is hugely diminished in the setting of today's

---

[3] Peter Searby, *Weavers and freemen in Coventry, 1820-186 : social and political traditionalism in an early Victorian town.* PhD thesis, University of Warwick (1972) http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/3472/ p. viii Accessed 22nd March 2019

[4] Peter Walters, *The Story of Coventry*, (Brimscombe, Stroud 2013) p. 1

[5] Cash's cottage factory, Kingfield, is the notable exception. The Chapelfields streetscape remains intact.

[6] Charles George Harper, *The Holyhead Road*, (London 1902) p. 279 at: https://archive.org/stream/holyheadroadmail01harpuoft/holyheadroadmail01harpuoft_djvu.txt Accessed 13th January 2019

[7] Marie Clucas & Mick Carpenter, *Who Knows, Who Cares?* Irish Health inequalities in Coventry (Coventry 2008) pp. 4, 14

[8] http://www.coventrysociety.org.uk/news/article/spotlight-on-the-ring-road.html Accessed 13th January 2019

[9] Adrian Smith, *City of Coventry: A Twentieth Century Icon* (London 2006) pp. 9-13, 107-110. These particular pages written by Coventrian Smith, whose mother was born in Galway provide a powerful synopsis of the causes of the disillusion that have followed the triumphalist vision of politicians and urban planners in the latter half of the twentieth century. These pages are valuable in that his critical observation on Coventry modernity is set in the contrasting, and to this study revealing, light of the lost 'surprisingly close-knit city' that found its roots in Victorian endeavours and skills, of which his parents and earlier generations were proud. For the non-Coventrian asking what exactly has happened in the city – to its community and fabric, these pages succinctly spell it out.

expansive city area.[10] The dimensions of the former were curtailed by the reach of a walker, the latter by administrative aggrandisement. The A45 road, by-passing this larger modern city to the south, and the M6 major motorway to the north, hide from the modern traveller, the past nodality of Coventry and have collapsed any sensation of the physical and mental distances that separated it from other cities. These routes have superseded the now lost arterially important Birmingham to London route through the city centre. This route was on the direct road line from London to Chester and Liverpool, and again on the London to Holyhead run. This coach 'highway' was used by Irish travellers, who by definition were wealthy, of 'first respectability', if using that travel mode. Activity on it must have left Coventrians forming a more sophisticated impression of Irish people than might be anticipated.

In the 1820s Irish travellers on the coach run may have chatted while refreshing in the Rose and Crown Inn or the Craven Arms Hotel in High Street, or in the King's Head Inn or the White Lion Hotel in Smithford Street about Telford's recent improvement from 1815, both of the road surface and the route alignment from Shrewsbury across Wales. His remarkable Menai bridge opened in 1824 had reduced the journey by several hours. Indeed Telford would have 'by-passed' Coventry but the local merchants resisted and he made do with opening a new road line off Spon Street that avoided the Allesley Road. The convenience of the new steam packets crossing the Irish Sea compared to the old sloops that could take up to a week to complete a voyage to Liverpool might have been mentioned. Equally there may have been complaints about how poor, or seasonal travellers, crowded the open-decks on Liverpool to Dublin voyages (they comprised 91.0% of the passengers between 1824 and 1830).[11] The busy traffic through Coventry to Dublin must surely have been acknowledged in Coventry as a consequence of the Union bringing the London power structure closer to Ireland, but there may have been inn gossip that the Union had failed, except in Ulster, to bring calm, or prosperity as indicated by the deteriorating state of Dublin silk production. The travellers might have complained that when trade was bad in Britain, surplus stock was dumped in Dublin, glutting the market and on sale at a price too low for Dublin weavers to match.[12] This

[10] The extent of the municipal area from 1842-1890 on which data for this study is centered, can be substantially distinguished on the ground today. The Birmingham-London railway line marks its southern extent, the Coundon railway loop indicates roughly its extent to the west. Chapelfields beyond the loop to be included. Coventry Canal from Foleshill Road bridge to the A444 roundabout at Stoke Heath marks its northern limit. The A444 south of the roundabout or more precisely the line just to its east marked by the B4110 (Swan Lane and later known as Humber Road) to the bridge over the Birmingham-London railway line completes.

[11] David, Dickson, *Dublin, The Making of a Capital City*, (London 2014) p. 253

[12] Report of the Royal Commission on the Hand-Loom Weavers, Assistant Commissioners Reports, Midland District, PP 1840 XXIV [217] p. 607

explained the arrival in Coventry after 1820 of some of those hand loom weavers from Dublin who could no longer survive free trade.

Daniel O'Connell's name may also have been introduced because his campaigns were well reported in the *Coventry Herald* where the issue of emancipation was seen raising the deepest historical distrust. Colley tells of the avalanche of around 3,000 anti-Catholic petitions from every part of the Britain on the House of Commons in 1828 and 1829. Coventry was no exception: the Archdeaconry of Coventry petitioned against, while the entire corporation supported another hostile petition.[13] Fiery letters were published in the *Herald*. A long letter prominent on the front page of 14th November 1828 complained, that in spite of the 'great concession' provided in the Acts of 1778 and 1791 the Catholic leaders of Ireland remained 'far from thankful for the benefits they now enjoy' and were exerting pressure for repeal of all laws which 'protect the Protestant Church, and the Protestant Ascendancy'.[14] O'Connell's campaigns were raising the issues among Coventrians of the treatment Ireland had received and the nature of the Irish character. The *Herald* editorial on 4th July 1828 was perplexed that O'Connell was standing in Clare against Vesey Fitzgerald who was in favour of Catholic Emancipation and remarked to its readers 'the affairs of unhappy Ireland peculiarly engross the attention of the public'. It continued that errors, such as O'Connell was making now, could be excused because 'He is a native of a conquered country, the soil of which has been confiscated to the victors, who now tell the people that their religion is repugnant to the Constitution'. The Irish have strong feelings and affections; their hearts are better than their heads; and it is no wonder that their conduct should be characterised by a deficiency of prudential calculation.'[15]

O'Connell passed through Coventry on 9th February 1829 where he changed horses on his way to London from Birmingham.[16] Most likely he would have stopped over in the Craven Arms which was Coventry's premier inn, with a stable block at the rear capable of accommodating forty horses. He would have preferred the Craven Arms

---

[13] Linda Colley, *Britons, Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (London 1992) pp. 348-351. Local MP's Thomas Fyler voted against Emancipation while Richard Heathcote voted in favour. Both were Tories who had come into representing the city at this time due to local political sensitivities. However Coventry was normally represented by Whig Edward Ellice until he died in 1863 and by a second MP usually a Whig or Liberal.

[14] The following offers a flavour of the passion aroused in the writer of the letter to the *Coventry Herald* 14th November 1828: 'Where is there a solitary instance of the Roman Catholic Church ever granting toleration to religious worship, in opposition to their vain, superstitious, arrogant, idolatrous, and bigoted form of worship, the glaring and pompous performance of which, instead of instilling into the mind, the mild and conciliatory principles of the Christian Religion, is only to create a false idea of the splendour of Popery, and the power of its priesthood, who in their intolerable vain egotism and ostentatious pride, ascribe every benignant feeling as emanating from themselves and not from God.'

[15] *Coventry Herald* 4th July 1828

[16] *Inverness Courier* 18th February 1829 p. 2. His coach was a four inside and six outside model.

to the Tory favoured King's Head Inn, as it was the headquarters of the Whigs who for long influenced Coventry opinion. It may have been obvious to some conversing in those inns, that once Emancipation had been achieved, O'Connell would turn to openly seek the Union's repeal. In pursuit of this in 1844 he would address a meeting in St. Mary's Hall to much local acclaim.

The coach traveller taking from his pocket a watch made in Coventry, which had a reputation for crafted timepieces, to ascertain if it was time to depart, would in that casual gesture have given, the clearest signal of his status, as few workmen could afford one. Victorian society was full of, not only open, but also coded practices that silently indicated respectability and notions of superior class position. Humbler Irish migrants were unaware of all the means which could be used to keep them at a social distance.

If the coach route was taken by anyone journeying in 1841 from a London direction towards Birmingham they would, at the edge of the town, see the 'House of Industry' known to all as the Workhouse. On the margin of many towns, austere red-bricked institutions had recently appeared since the Poor Law Act of 1834. In Coventry the ancient Whitefriar's monastery had been used as the workhouse since 1801 and had a benevolent reputation. Its somnolent outward appearance in 1841 belied what was occurring within, where a more austere regime, to make it an unattractive destination, was being insisted on by Poor Law Commissioners. There was a pauper population of 228 of whom 14 had Irish association. The Irish comprised 6.6% of the inmates and even after the Famine years this proportion would not increase. Of these, 30 year old Irish-born Mary Hassett seems to have been vulnerable, as with her resided therein five children ranging from 5 years to 5 months all born in Derbyshire.[17]

The traveller would cover a route from the edge of the town, in the descriptive words of Harper 'with many twists and turns and narrow passes through picturesque slums' that could be called 'the maze of Much Park Street, Earl Street and High Street' (see Maps 2.2).[18] If the traveller rested at the King's Head Inn, at the corner of Hertford Street and Smithford Street he may not have realised that residing with his father Francis, in Hertford Street was a young James Hart born in County Down in 1829.

---

[17] HO107.1152.14. Only her 3 year old daughter Mary can be located a decade later. She was then a 13 year old 'servant of all work' for Irish-born John Lamb. He was a hand loom silk weaver who newly appears in the 1851 census with his Irish-born family in Hertford Square. The continued presence of Mary's daughter shows that some link with Coventry remained and prompts the question was John Lamb's hiring of 13 year old Mary a charitable action (HO107.2067.31.630.17). The *Coventry Standard* 20th October 1843 reported that Mary Hassett, an Inmate of the Workhouse was committed to the House of Correction, and to be kept to hard labour for 20 days, for obstinately refusing to do such work as she was able to do.

[18] Harper, *Holyhead Road*, pp. 266, 268

Commonly referred to later as 'Paddy', he was to become one of the major (and most trenchant) ribbon manufacturers in the city (Appendix 2).[19]A short distance along Smithford Street was the arched entrance to the Barracks where 84 Irish-born resided. Therein a young Irish-born John King was second in command of 6th Dragoons Regiment, with 143 (78%) of the 184 barrack residents having an Irish connection. The Barrack Master who lived in Bull Yard was Irish-born (as were subsequent ones into the 1890s), namely John Kelly with his wife and four children all of whom were Irish-born. The Irish cavaliers smartly dressed in the king's uniform must have left in the Coventry air a reassurance that order, loyalty and neatness could be just much an Irish trait as the one more commonly projected by the bedraggled appearance of some other Irish.[20] The journeyer could not have realised as he exited the city via the Holyhead Road to the west, that the small nearby Catholic chapel fallen into disrepair in Hill Street, would in November of the same year see the arrival of Fr William Ullathorne (Appendix 2).[21] He had visited Ireland earlier in the year, and before that in 1837, and had been impressed by Fr Theobald Matthew's temperance movement. He was keen to organise the Coventry mission in Hill Street, which Champ said was in a 'very dispirited condition'.[22] He had left Coventry by 1846 but the city's Irish Catholics - even if the mission remained 'English' in character - had the benefit of his evangelical energy, his strong sermonising (particularly against alcohol), and his efforts to raise funds for a new church.

Like so many, the traveller had exited quickly and had seen Coventry not as regionally dominant like Birmingham or socially desirable like Leamington, but more a drab pass-through town on a journey to elsewhere. His journey traversing the city from south-east to west was through a narrow road corridor and on having encountering few Irish, may not have realised that in 1841 the Irish were located in every one of the 56 non-institutional enumerations areas that covered the city.[23]

---

[19] Historic Coventry, https://forum.historiccoventry.co.uk/main/search-posts.php?q=paddy+hart Accessed 23rd March 2019

[20] Apart from a militia headquarters Leicester had no barracks in the town. The South Wigston Barracks was opened in 1881 on the southern edge of the city. The cavalry barracks in Birmingham was at Great Brook Street, Aston on the then eastern periphery of the city.

[21] The chapel in Hill Street was almost certainly visible across an open field, from the closely parallel running Holyhead Road.

[22] Judith F. Champ, *William Bernard Ullathorne, 1806-1889: A Different Kind of Monk*, (Leominster 2006) p. 90

[23] Irish were not found in four rural enumerations areas at the edge: East side London Road/Pinley HO 107/1152.5.2 ED 9; Harnall Lane HO107/1153.6.6 ED 20; Paines Lane HO107/1153.7.21 ED 22; Radford HO107/1154.9.1 ED 25; The Irish were to be found in 59 of the 61 non-institutional enumeration districts of the city in 1851. They were not found in two enumeration districts on the northeastern edge of the city in 1851. The first with 83 persons was a thinly populated largely agricultural: Red Lane & Caludon (HO107/2067.708 ED 37). The second with 500 persons was in Hillfields: King William

In fact by 1841 our hypothetical traveller would no longer have taken a coach direct from London. Such means of lengthy travel had become obsolete since the fast, double track, inter-city London and Birmingham Railway line, crossing east to west, had opened three years earlier, just beyond the southern edge of the built-up city. This served as an advantage, in that people could easily access (or indeed vacate) the city, but in another way it caused the city to lose its position - relevant to the horse drawn era - as a normal journey stage-point in the movement of national traffic. The appearance of being marooned symbolised the wider issue that the new powered forces in transport and manufacturing were outflanking old Coventry certainties.

The almost invisible Sherbourne River now flows forgotten for most of its cross-city course in an underground concrete conduit.[24] In the nineteenth century the building of houses and works right up to its water's edge around Trafalgar Street and again in Well Street/West Orchard was an indicator of the congested state of the city. Its channel, which gave rise to unhealthy environs, then could be openly seen passing through the vicinity of West Orchard, Well Street, New Buildings and Palmer Lane where many of the Irish described in this study resided. An authentic link with this Irish yesteryear is nonetheless visible in the townscape. Coventry is known as the city of the three spires, which belong to the old Cathedral of St. Michael, Holy Trinity Church and Christ Church. To the nineteenth century observer, these marked the central city area and their visibility defined the ambit of a compact city. Although customarily thought of as a set of three, there is a prominent fourth spire; that of St. Osburg's Church commenced by Ullathorne in 1843 and opened in 1845. Such a church, Gilley would regard as 'the very embodiment of the Catholic imagination in stone'.[25] There over Sunday, 31st March 1851 Fr Ralph Pratt estimated 2,200 Catholics attended Divine Service.[26] Many in the congregation were Irish, who must have felt heartened at the existence of a new, proudly spired gothic church building. Elsewhere in society a

---

Street/Primrose Hill (HO107/2068.361 ED 1s). Institutional enumeration areas e.g. the Barracks, or the Gaol are listed in Table 5.27.

[24] Except for a brief appearance in Palmer Lane. The lane is accessed through an archway in Burges. The writer visited Palmer Lane on 9th October 2015 and to his surprise noticed a distinct odour emitting from the river. It brought recall of unhealthy conditions in the river environs less than two centuries earlier when Irish located in its immediate vicinity. This impression was reinforced subsequently on reading a BBC News Report 'Tracing the hidden River Sherbourne under Coventry' which referred to the 'hidden river: contained, covered and contaminated'. It continued 'The River Sherbourne makes a brief reappearance in the city centre, among the bins and back doors of shops behind Cross Cheaping, where its rotten smell, like damp decomposing cabbages, unmistakably rises from its murky flow'. http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-coventry-warwickshire-30446327 Accessed 13th January 2019

[25] Sheridan Gilley, Roman Catholicism and the Irish in England, in Donald M. MacRaild (ed.), *The Great Famine and Beyond: Irish Migrants in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (Dublin 2000) p. 148

[26] National Archives HO129/400 p. 4. The OS Town Map of Coventry 1888 states the church could seat 580.

number of Irish may have attracted disapproval or suspicion due to their branding by the faith they bore; here in the pews possession of faith was validated and normalised, the need for approval satisfied, and confirmation to the indigent that poverty was a blessed state. Today these four spires collectively stand as the most eminent manifestation of former times, with the still less common acknowledgement of the existence of the fourth 'Catholic' one providing its own metaphorical significance. It marks in Hill Street the only place that now speaks to Coventry's history as a residency of the mid-nineteenth century Irish; where, as Clem Richardson would describe, the 'cultural imprint takes tangible form'.[27] Its irregular rough finished stone wall exterior and its plain unassuming interior could have been more to the humbler taste of migrants than the medieval romanticism of Pugin's red brick St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham, with it tall, thin pillared arches and gilded detail. Churches - no doubt in Coventry - were consciously built with the intention that the solidity and impressiveness of the edifice would make a statement about permanence. Catholic churches often built with the pennies of the poor enduringly remind of the sacrifices and hardships made by forebears. Age old ceremony recurring within, provided continuity with the past as new generations experienced liturgies formalised by generations of ago. Over the years, aided by becoming repositories of memorials, churches functioned to commemorate the past as much as to serve the present. Some have survived into twenty-first century Coventry as a reminder of yesterday's urban fabric. Beyond these centrepieces, the close landscape of the nineteenth century city - shops, houses, workshops and factories, yards, lanes and courts, through repeated urban makeovers has vanished in the blur of time just like the lost municipal society, with it mores and moods, that lived on it.[28]

A person journeying that route through the city might not have realised, that they had passed so closely by many with Irish association, due to the fact the Irish resided in side streets and courts just off Smithford Street and Much Park Street. Seventy five such, resided in the latter, at a time more than four years before the Famine inrush to Britain began (See Appendix 1). It would not have crossed the mind of the archetypal traveller of 1841 to stop and look behind the presentable street façade that hid the impoverished living conditions in the yards behind. He might have asked himself why he ever should, since the environment appeared as normal for his time. In such a state of reasoning, any deprivation in the yards was the fault of the occupants themselves, and

[27] C. Richardson, The Irish in Victorian Bradford, *The Bradford Antiquary*, 9 (1976) p. 316

[28] Some gems such as the medieval Old College of Bablake with Bonds Hospital in Hill Street, Medieval St. Marys Hall in Bailey Lane, or Georgian Kirby House, 16 Little Park Street, or 7 Little Park Street have survived and are still in use.

not an issue that involved him. Towns such as Nottingham and Birmingham had a preponderance of working people, many of whom were court dwellers and Coventry was no different. Again Coventry suffered a recent cholera outbreak in 1839, tuberculosis was a grave problem, and the depression of 1837 had not yet ended, so a risk existed of catching disease or being approached by those in hardship seeking alms in such confined quarters.

However if he did stop, he may not have been able to readily identify the Irish. In 1841 their surnames did not always provide reliable ethnic identification.[29] Nor were their occupations always of an unskilled labourer type, since many were involved in the weaving activity of the city. The length of time some were resident in Coventry meant that their accent and appearance could have been audibly and visibly 'local'. Neither was there pronounced residential clustering of the Irish which was a reputed feature of Irish behaviour in other cities.

The Irish weavers would have worked long hours, in their own domestic world, in a patient pattern of life akin to the weavers in the population at large. Some may have been former soldiers and so were conditioned to order and discipline. Weavers from the east of Ireland were spoken of as industrious and since they would have sought stock and provided finished work to the manufacturers a reputation for reliability was essential.[30] Weavers had different income levels but those in the city centre were spoken of as poor; their income further restricted by the trade depression in 1841. The need to feed their children meant earning money was a priority. The tightening up, following the Poor Law Act of 1834 on the provision of outdoor relief, which through particular Coventrian circumstances only began to impact from 1840 onwards meant the feared Workhouse was in prospect for those in difficulty. The accommodation in Much Park Street was known to be dilapidated and unhealthy and its affordability must have been the priority attraction to them. A breakdown in health due to these unsanitary surroundings could prove disastrous.[31]

In some Irish related studies the native population often presents as a homogenous backdrop, sharing the prejudices of the age and wishing to increase their own sense of self-importance by regarding Irish people as simply inferior Other. However there is a generality about such statements. Much is unclear about the Irish in pre-Famine

---

[29] A selection of Irish-born from the Coventry census of 1841:
Beaver, Bird, Brazell, Brownlow, Fawcett, Fleetwood, Fox, Greenway, Harris, Hayward, Jones, Lapworth, Montgomery, Newbold, Oliphant, Phillips, Pickard, Sidwell, Smith, Stewart, Temple, Thorpe, Tucker, Whittendale and Wilkinson.

[30] Report on the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain, Appendix G Part II, PP 1836 XXXIV p. 89

[31] Second Report of Commissioners of Inquiry into the state of large towns and populous districts, Appendix, PP 1845 XVIII [602] [610] p. 259

Coventry, thus it can only be speculated what welcome they received from native families living in courthouses alongside them, and whether the Irish considered it wise, where they were outnumbered, to play down their background. There may have been native families in 1841, before the arrival of a more uncouth element of Irish after the Famine, who were in similar circumstances to the Irish and tolerated the Irish even if it was on the basis that Irish presence kept rents low. The transience of court residents must have meant that new residents were not regarded as intruders, which might have arisen if there was a tradition of long-term settlement in these yards. There was a nuclear family structure that underpinned the Irish presence and evidence of exogamy that suggested local acceptance. Their commitment to Coventry was mainly based on opportunity in the silk trade, and if not available, small sized households would if necessary move elsewhere to find it. Irish association with other Irish centred on consanguineal bonds, relationships between families created through marriage and on common provenance in Ireland, but the existence of a cohesive Irish community at the time seems doubtful.

In 1841 the 'high noon' of Victorianism, as identified by Kitson Clarke, was some years in the offing, as it was for the staple silk industry in Coventry.[32] Much was going to change in relation to the Irish presence in Coventry over the short and medium term. Indeed some dubious Irish characters would come to reside in Much Park Street. Coventry people were aware of the build up of dreadful conditions in Ireland wherein lay the potential for calamity. The *Herald* would editorialise in 1844 about 'galling injustice from which Ireland has so long suffered' and that 'In spirit and in practice - in all but actual blood-shedding, the Government are now broadly at war with the Catholic population Of Ireland'.[33]

It is hoped this introductory reflection reveals an approach that is sensitive to historic place, past occasion and transience that will help recreate the setting, and disposition of a typical British midland town chosen by the Irish as their destination. It is trusted that likewise sensitivity will be seen to exist in this appraisal of the Irish, and the quality of their interaction with the city, and each other, given they were not a homogenous group. It is hoped that particular regard will be taken of Irish in Coventry who were similar to those that Davis instanced when reviewing Lees' study on the

[32] G. Kitson Clark, *The Making of Victorian England*, (London 1962) p. 31. He was referring specifically to the third quarter of the century.
[33] *Coventry Herald* 19th January 1844

London Irish. These were Irish who unlike the Irish of the slums 'lived quietly in equal numbers in lower concentration in mixed centres of population [and] went unnoticed'.[34]

The Aim and Objectives of this study

The aim of this study will be to examine the standing of a small Irish community settling in a compact, 'county' type midland town. It sets out to ascertain how the response might have differed from the experience recorded in more popular study locales; experience which has provided the general 'script' for the mainland.[35] Previous research on Irish migrants, considered in Chapter 1, has often been drawn to the problematic majority experience of migrants settling in the largest urban areas. Such places attracted a large migrant population and through sheer numbers of those arriving, often in circumstance of crisis, extreme demand was placed on an inadequate and insufficient housing stock, leading with other factors, to residential overcrowding and clustering. In such surroundings the presence of a large number of migrants, of itself could bolster self-confidence in their culture and social behaviour (about which the native population may have been suspicious or antagonistic) and so could prolong migrant isolation. The sight of what appeared to be a never ending stream of migrants, at a level that was not easily quantified, could exaggerate fears among the native population of increased threat to the social order and to native employment opportunity.[36] In 1851 there were 83,813 Irish-born residing in Liverpool, and in Manchester & Salford were 52,504 Irish-born. These figures represented 22.3% and 13.1% respectively of municipal populations and are figures that merely refer to those born in Ireland. If their British born children and spouses are added then the size and impact of this 'Irish community' is even more consequential. These percentages relate to city totals, but within cities the Irish comprised higher percentages of the population in certain wards where they were concentrated. In relation to Liverpool's 14 wards in 1851, 47% of the population in each of the two wards - Vauxhall and Exchange was Irish-born. Much of the long lasting negative stereotype that discredited migrants nationally and could tar all Irish with the same brush, was based on depictions - if overblown and inaccurate - of 'Little Ireland' type settlement in such large areas. Liverpool and Manchester & Salford are often cited but York, Birmingham and Wolverhampton are also exemplars. Interest which there has been in the experience of larger-city migrant volumes has not been as keenly taken in that of smaller volumes of

[34] Graham Davis, The Irish in Britain, 1815-1939, in Andrew Bielenberg (ed.), *The Irish Diaspora*, (London 2000) p. 25

[35] Coventry was not actually a county town. Its role as a county town disappeared on the abolition of the County of Coventry in 1842. It is referred to on most occasions by its historic title 'city'.

[36] Paul O'Leary, *Immigration and Integration, The Irish in Wales 1798-1922*, (Cardiff 2000) p. 107

Irish in more secondary locations. Pooley remarked that what was required was an 'examination of the full range of Irish migrants in a variety of communities of different sizes and economic structures to ascertain the diversity of migrants and of their experience'. This he felt should counteract the homogenous view taken of the migrants by nineteenth century commentators largely based on the reports of the Irish destitute massed in slum areas of larger towns and cities. He stated there was a 'need to assess more precisely the social and demographic impact of Irish migrants on British towns'.[37] O'Leary was of the view that an emphasis upon the social and cultural diversity of the Irish would show that 'their experience varied not only in towns but also between towns and cities of different sizes and economic structures'.[38] Herson in promoting his study of Stafford, which he promulgated as representative of small town Britain, decried the neglect of historians in examining the Irish in the minor municipality.[39]

This study takes up this challenge as it pertains to Coventry. The degree of community change and integration of the Irish in a small city as exemplified by Coventry warrants exploration; the relative size of the city is shown in Table 1.1. Coventry is justifiable as a setting for a study, of low volume influx into the smaller town. It had a total population of 36,812 in 1851, of which 698 or 1.9% were Irish-born.[40] It is suggested that Coventry represented a quintessential 'county' type town. It symbolized the 'ordinary' smaller nineteenth century city, possessing a cathedral sized parish church, cavalry barracks, workhouse, and its own staple, signature industries of silk ribbon making and watchmaking. The city was an ancient one and with certain dispositions to its freemen and munificent charities imbued its residents with a sense of its special character. It had a distinctive, existence from Birmingham, which was a city 17 miles to the west with thirteen times its population in 1851. A distance of 23 miles

---

[37] Colin G. Pooley, Segregation or integration? The residential experience of the Irish in mid-Victorian Britain, in Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989) p. 61

[38] Paul O'Leary, *Immigration and Integration, The Irish in Wales 1798-1922*, (Cardiff 2000) p. 129

[39] John Herson, Irish migration and settlement in Victorian Britain: a small-town perspective, in Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989) p. 97. Subsequent to these appeals in 1989, 2000 and 1999 respectively, interest in different dimensions of Irish local settlement has increased, as is typified by the Danaher's study of Leicester in 1999, Moriarty's study of Huddersfield in 2010 and Brown's study of Swindon in 2011. (Nessan John Eugene Danaher, *The Irish in Leicester, c. 1841 to c. 1891: A study of a Minority Community in the East Midlands*,. Doctoral Thesis, University of North London (1999); Esther Maria Moriarty, *The Great Famine - an Irish tragedy and its impact on the English town of Huddersfield from 1845-1861*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Huddersfield (2010); Lynda Brown, Irish Railway Workers and Soldiers in Wiltshire, in Graham Davis (ed.), *In search of a better life, British and Irish Migration*, (Stroud 2011) pp. 48-73).
Roger Swift, Identifying the Irish in Victorian Britain: Recent Trends in Historiography, in R. Swift and S. Gilley (eds.), *Irish Identities in Victorian Britain*, (Abingdon 2011) p. 9

[40] If the 130 Irish-born who comprised the majority of the 4th Dragoon Guards cavalry troop who resided, largely self contained, in the centre city barracks in 1851, and who were subject to biennial rotation, are excluded from household analysis, then the Irish 'community' figure is even more compact.

separated it from Leicester to the north east where Danaher found an unwelcoming 'powerfully' anti-Irish Protestant ambience. Coventry might be seen, beneath the silk weaving and watch making activity, as essentially a drab market town, not too far beyond its medieval shape and character. It endured poor social conditions in the early century and a late, difficult transition from the dominance of domestic production to that of factory production. Following a catastrophic collapse of its silk industry in 1860 the city recovered later in the century by reinventing itself as bicycle manufacturing city. Most cities have aspects of discredit, none more so than Coventry in the nineteenth century. It was a densely crowded city, with dreadful living conditions for the urban poor up to mid-century. It had courts and back-to-backs whose filth or proximity to the polluted river led to outbreaks of cholera in 1832 and 1849. It had a high mortality rate above national average beyond mid-century which meant that it was the first of ten cities on a list for investigation by the medical officer who reported to the Privy Council in 1858. Sickness or unemployment brought destitution while the Poor Law turned the screw on relief for the poor. It endured the shock of its staple silk industry collapsing in 1860 which traumatised the city for a decade. Watchmaking, its other industry was also fading in importance as the century progressed, again slowly asphyxiated by mass production and competition. Bicycle making brought golden years of hope in the final quarter of the century but the slump of 1896 showed that while it would provide a skill pool for twentieth century motor manufacture, it had reached its crest through overproduction and competition from Birmingham. It was not a city of saintly people; there were weekly reports of locals charged before magistrates for stealing, pickpocketing, breaching the peace, drunk and disorderly behaviour, etc. Miscreants could be placed in stocks as late as 1837 and a boy of 10 years was whipped in 1840.[41] From mid-century, municipal infrastructure improved, and through the provision of utilities and regulation for a healthier environment the harshness and danger so prevalent earlier was lessened. Coventry presents aspects of a typical midland Victorian city, and while its populace had their own internal issues which were capable of creating anger, it also displayed a peculiar placidity that provided a benign setting for the Irish.[42]

The study will seek out the key factors that may explain the level of Irish presence in the city. The role played by Coventrian determinants such its industrial reputation, location and accessibility will be reviewed. More generalised influences will also be

---

[41] *Coventry Standard* 6th January 1837; *Coventry Standard* 6th October 1837; *Coventry Herald* 27th March 1840 - The boy received a whipping and a day's imprisonment for stealing a pair of boots from a shop in Jordan Well.

[42] The nature of this peculiar placidity is considered in Chapter 2.3.

noted for instance the increase in migrants settling in Britain from the 1820s with a crescendo post-Famine, place of origin links, kin invitation and chain migration. The Irish experience following arrival will be described and assessed. They inserted themselves, *en masse* after the Famine into an urban milieu, which was undergoing painful, industrial adaptation to powered manufacture and whose inadequate infrastructure and housing stock was already under pressure from rapid population growth[43]

The approach of this study will be to focus largely on households and in doing so will consider how the household structure underpinned the Irish community. It was a structure that was seen by Lees in London as maintaining a framework of order in the chaos of the mid-century inrush. The Irish will be seen throughout as residing either in *Irish Households* or in *English Households containing Irish*.[44] Irish settlement over the century will be examined, and will be based primarily on the censuses of 1841-1901 which cover the entirety of those in the nineteenth century that show Ireland as a place of birth.

The term 'Irish' has been regularly employed by writers with the casual assumption that these people shared a common culture and identity. In fact they were not homogeneous and included persons of different social background, provenance and religion. Children born in Britain to Irish migrants have also been regarded as Irish. The term 'community' that can suggest a sharing of characteristics and interests, or cohesion is often applied to a collection of these people without proper clarification of what is implied. There is awareness in this study on the implication of reliance on raw Irish-born totals, aggregating details of a disparate group under the term Irish, the complexity around the notion of community, and issues involved in deciding whose detail should be extracted from the census manuscripts in order that size of a community might be found.

All those recognised by the criteria set out in Chapter 1 as having an Irish connection in a particular census will be included in the analysis as the 'Irishcom' of that census.[45] Thus use of the word specifically indicates this study's database Irish are being referred to while in itself an Irishcom total will provide a more satisfactory impression of the extent of the 'community'. Irish-born totals will be a subset of an

---

[43] M.A. Busteed and R. I. Hodgson, Irish Migrant Responses to Urban Life in Early Nineteenth-Century Manchester, *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 162, No. 2 (Jul., 1996) pp. 141-145

[44] These categories represent specific persons selected by the norms of this study, and to ensure their exclusivity they are italicised and labelled as such throughout these chapters.

[45] As will be explained later those with an Irish association e.g. local-born children of Irish-born parentage cannot be readily recognised once they grow up and leave the parent headed household.

Irishcom total; the dual display of Irish-born and Irishcom figures in a number of Tables should assist appreciation of the scale of the Irish 'community' and the number of Irish-born at its core.[46] While committed to a quantitative reveal the study will be equally sensitive to the nature of the mean short lives of many. Carefully chosen but restricted examples of circumstances will be introduced such as that, of Irish-born Martin Malone 42 years, who in 1891 lived with Charlotte 41 years, born in Cradley Heath and their young family at 16 St Agnes Lane. Neither adult could be located in the 1901 census as Martin had died in 1892 aged 43 and Charlotte had died in 1899 aged 49 years.[47]

Awareness will be maintained of the demographic dynamic whereby over the century a significant group of migrants were in a youthful age cohort when commencing residence in Coventry and over the years as they moved up throughout the age population pyramid their behaviour was influenced by the outlook consistent with their age-cohort. There were three streams of inward settlement, the first which began arriving in 1820s, the second post-Famine, and the third from the 1880s. Each of the latter two streams, when newly arrived engaged in a repeat of behaviour appropriate to an age band e.g. getting married, or being rowdy that had been practiced by the stream that preceded it. The prevalence of particular age related anti-social behaviour in the 1850s and 1860s will be observed in the study.

Often nineteenth century studies confine themselves to a searching analysis of a particular census, especially those taken following the Famine inrush. This study identifies a pre-Famine Irish community who had already established the spatial pattern that was later swollen in post-Famine years. It anchors the Irish presence in Coventry in 1841, using the census of that year which if rudimentary, was the first census to show Ireland as birthplace. The intention is to provide a continuum therefrom, through coverage of all remaining censuses for the century, assisted by the good fortune that the Coventry area covered can be held constant throughout. With this wider temporal embrace, settlement and adjustment of a whole generation, before its heaping in old age, and its inevitable decay and replacement by a second generation, can be explored. It will allow for an assessment in the small urban area of the rapidity of 'ethnic fade', which according to MacRaild is the belief of most historians to have occurred once the Famine influx years had passed.[48] The envelopment of weaver James McGowran's son William

[46] The use of this term 'Irishcom' avoids in as far as possible clumsy phrases such as 'Non-Irish-born Irish' or 'other Irish' as found in Lowe's work. (W. J. Lowe, *The Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire: The Shaping of a Working-Class Community*, (New York 1989) p. 49)

[47] RG12/2452.101.22 ED 4

[48] Donald M. MacRaild, *Culture, Conflict and Migration: Irish in Victorian Cumbria*, (Liverpool 1998) p. xiv

in Coventry society as shown by his becoming a city councillor indicates what was possible in the turn of a generation.[49]

Hickman was critical of the nature of migrant analysis, since it appeared to her that 'The prime activity becomes the dissection of the minority group itself.'[50] This study counters that accusation by having collected data on every household head in the city for 1851 and again for 1881 thereby allowing for comparison of the Irish to be made within a city-wide framework. It will examine scholarly analyses on Irish migration and assess the availability and quality of primary sources such as the census, and local newspapers. From the latter an indication may be gleaned of the warmth of the local reception the Irish received bearing in mind Gilley's observation that prejudice of a local type is difficult to ascertain.[51] Surveyed also, in the way it directly pertained to the local Irish is the treatment of Ireland by the British establishment during the nineteenth century. The entwining of Irish and Catholic identity and the Catholic Church's capacity to act as an integrative/differentiating force will be referenced.

This research will concentrate not only the experience of the majority but will keep under review the response of the remaining less discernible minority. Other such studies noticed clustering *within* large urban areas and this understandably arouses the curiosity of a researcher, but it may lead to an overlooking of the smaller diffuse numbers of Irish city dwellers settled away from Irish quarters. Davis referred to two residential patterns: the isolated concentration in the dilapidated parts of a city and 'the rather more predominant but rather less highlighted' Irish living alongside the English.[52] Residential dispersal may indicate individuals with greater mobility and integration. With local study analyses of a type that centre around conditions in the 'top ten' most Irish streets, and normally with these core Irish streets acting as reception areas for migrants, it is not surprising that what is conveyed is a dominant picture of transience, boarding, and unskilled migrant youth with an undiluted rural culture. However on the cluster fringe, or scattered in streets farther apart from clusters, where the isolationist drag of clustering is lessened, a more established, integrated Irish may be found by virtue of intermarriage, a desire to put down roots, a movement closer to a fixed place of

[49] However his case may have been exceptional and could have been facilitated by his Irish and weaving background, together with his Liberal credentials that were popular among the Irish, in attracting votes.
[50] Mary J. Hickman, Alternative historiographies of the Irish in Britain: a critique of the segregation/assimilation model, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain*, (London 1999) p. 237
[51] Roger Swift, 'Another Stafford Street Row': Law, Order and the Irish Presence in mid-Victorian Wolverhampton, in Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City*, (London 1985) p. 198
[52] Graham Davis, Little Irelands, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989) p. 112

work, increasing length of residence permitting citywide familiarity and growth in contact with locals. The recording and analysis of the spatial expression of the migrant is a feature of this study. Others studies appear largely content with city summations, or the display of results at ward or parish level, and perhaps a micro-analysis of a popular 'Irish' street. It is the intention of this study to pinpoint the location by house of those recognised as Irishcom in 1861 and 1881 in a number of vicinities of interest, and to comment on the contrast. For reasons centred around the Greenhow Report of 1860 considered later, the census of 1861 is given spatial expression. It is felt that the 1881 census provides the most appropriate one of contrast to it since thereafter the 'original' Irish-born were in numerical decline and their grown children difficult to isolate in the census. Furthermore citywide spatial distribution, and location quotients of the Irishcom will be mapped for different censuses. The latter maps will quantify how concentrated the Irishcom were in each enumeration area as compared to the Coventry population in the same area. The degree of clustering or scatter that maps display, and the reservations in interpreting information gleaned from an enumeration area reticulation will be aired.

It will be an intention to contribute to the discourse on methodological approach to Irish migrant urban settlement. From examining the complications that arise in handling relevant census material, strategies may emerge to assist in redressing the regrettable lack of commonality of approach found in many studies. Studies based on authors' individually constructed databases do not offer consistency when inter-city comparison is sought, in a manner that studies commenced on the basis of an integrated platform might bring. These isolated studies, though well-rounded in themselves, lack an attachment to an overarching field of study consistency in whether Irish-born or 'de facto' Irish are being measured; in the range or interval of years researched; the drawing of appropriate areal boundary; or the presentation of statistics at a common level of aggregation. Without promoting the need to have introduced some objective criteria and a widely recognised protocol supporting integration of studies, the outcome that will continue to occur will be of a type Pooley referred to when he stated, 'depending on the spatial units used and the definition of segregation adopted, almost any town could be shown to have either a highly clustered or a widely dispersed distribution of Irish migrants.'[53]

Organisation of the remainder of the thesis

It is fortunate that this study has now available to inform it the distillation of approximately forty years of the finest scholarship. Chapter 1 will seek to contextualise

[53] Pooley, *Segregation or integration*? p. 73

the study through outlining the development, change of interpretation and present state of investigation which has recognised the diversity of experience of the Irish in Britain. The chapter will then set out the demographic size of the Irish-born population and relate it proportionally to the city and volumes in other cities, particularly similar sized cities. The migrants themselves left little sense of how they experienced their adjustment to British cities and especially to Coventry. To overcome their silence, recourse is made to the census and contemporary reports. It is hoped that the standardised information in the former with the colour of the latter will round out the position of the Irish; but each origin has its limitations. The primary nature of the census, its comprehensive coverage and the substantive ordered information it contains, that permits a systematic approach, is of great value. The absence of quality census information for earlier in the century is regrettable. Although the 1841 census provides information of a sort, it is the 1851 census and those following with their more sophisticated format that provide the matrix of migrant analysis for the century.[54] Further, because the 1851 census is the first suitably workable census, together with the fact that its coverage coincides with interest in settlement of the Famine years, it has meant that the mid-century was for long the most intensely researched age. The content of contemporary official reports, and Coventry comment on the Irish, Catholic Church, and affairs in Ireland will be introduced with heed to the objectivity of such material. Chapter 2 will first seek to establish the character of Coventry which is the setting for the study. Its history as an ancient city, with its then medieval regional importance, symbolised by town walls - credentials not shared by Birmingham or Leicester, on a par with York or Norwich, will be placed aside to avoid the chapter slipping into an historical account of the municipality. It will focus on those aspects of city experience that have relevance to the Irish onwards from the end of 'big purl time'. This was prosperous period that ended in 1815, which was subsequently fondly envied as the golden age of weaving in the city.[55] The developments in silk ribbon weaving, so intrinsic to the sentience of the city are outlined, with watchmaking and cycle manufacture referred to. These activities with their changing fortunes were the attractors of Irish and were the social and economic drivers of the city. An understanding is sought of the built environment that led to courtyard living and topshop housing. The

[54] See Appendix 19

[55] 'The City of Coventry: Crafts and industries, Modern industry and trade', in W.B. Stephens (ed.), *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8, the City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (London 1969) pp. 162-189, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/warks/vol8/pp. 162-189 Accessed 8th November 2015. The 'big purl' time during the years of the Napoleonic Wars was regarded as a halcyon period when there was a high demand for ribbons. This epithet referred to an unprecedented demand at the time for ribbons with loops at the edges.

residential arrangement of those in different social groups and those in different occupations will be discerned. The stark environmental and social conditions endured by poor in the city and the beneficial effect of municipal improvement as century progressed will be explored.

The study proceeds by way of Chapter 3 where the factors that influenced Irish to settle in Coventry will be reviewed, the locations where they resided identified, and contemporary remarks on the character of those locations scrutinised. The pattern of their settlement will be studied, and if clustering appears obvious, what it may convey about segregation. Irish behaviour in the city until 1875 will be disclosed; a number of families that gave the Irish repute will be identified as will the reasons why the Irish came into contact with the police.

Chapter 4 will explore how nationalism expressed forcefully or through political discourse may have affected cultural identity. In the Catholic Church's marking out with ritual the serious stages in their passage through life, it was inextricably linked to the majority of migrants. It offered another collective identity which could, as Smith observed, overlap ethnic identity and reinforce each other.[56] How these identities fared in Coventry and whether the Catholic Church attempted to mould ethnic identity in terms of religious identity will be considered. It will outline the Catholic Church's infrastructural presence, its standing in the city, and will outline the degree to which it acknowledged, involved and supported its Irish members. Chapters 5 and 6 are substantive chapters that will outline Irish household structure, Irish community attributes and locate areas of Irish concentration; the former in years of heightened arrival 1841-1861. Chapter 6 addressing the years 1871-1901 captures an ageing Irish-born cohort who came to Britain from the 1820s, together with a generation of Irish who were born in Coventry, and a collection of newly arriving Irish-born seeking employment in an expanding municipality. Both this and the previous chapter will seek to draw out the nature and influence of those Irish-born who did not fit the 'Celtic poor' paradigm that featured in Chapter 3. The study concludes with Chapter 7 evaluating the complex of local and national factors that determined the nature of Irish settlement in Coventry and relates its experience to the wider context. The fixed word limit permitted on submission of this study does not leave room in its body for comprehensive reflection on notions of identity and community, nor for sufficient elaboration on some important national societal stands and changes occurring over the century, that affected

[56] Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, (London 1991) pp. 6, 7

the Irish. The reader is invited to read these considerations in Appendices 18 and 19 and reflections on the census of 1911 in the Appendix 20.

Chapter 1

Irish settlement: perspectives, population and evidence

There is now an expansive body of findings pertaining to Irish residence in nineteenth-century Britain.[57] In order to find the most appropriate interrogative approach and comparative evidence for this study the chapter opens with a consideration of the range and development of investigation in this field. Enquiry reached its zenith at the turn of the twenty-first century with insights having matured over the previous thirty years. The earliest students of migration were generally content with a static exploration of a census or two in the wake of the Famine years. The scholarly excitement that then derived from analysis of the predicament surrounding the Famine influx appears satiated. Though immensely contributive to understanding, such enquiries appear from the vantage of now, as scoping, descriptive exercises that have lost some of their freshness.

Over time, the record has been re-interpreted, with the universal application of an 'outcast' narrative that held sway in early studies almost discarded. This had been founded on accounts where only the most egregious anti-social behaviour and desperate living conditions were cited and without allowance for the biased penning of contemporary officialdom. So also has the custom of visualising the Irish migrant community as if it was comprised of only a 'Celtic Catholic' unsophisticated population under stress. O'Day remarked that along with the very poorest, many of the best-educated in Ireland had migrated to Britain.[58]

The significance of scale has been recognised. There is a realisation endorsed in this study's aims that large volumes of Irish-born in metropolitan areas could create their own sustainable dynamic, and findings therefrom may not offer appropriate explanation for Irish experience in smaller cities with lesser volume. The sheer amount of Irish in lower social classes, found in larger cities may have drawn attention from, and unduly obscure a smaller but influential group of non-mainstream Irish. The prosperity of the larger city could also be to its relative advantage, by assisting in early consolidation and subsequent embedding of its migrants. Interest in the issue of whether the Irish were socially or residentially segregated seems to have lost much of its initial force. This has been an engrossing topic in relation to municipalities with high volumes of Irish where self-evident clusters raised questions as to their occurrence and implication. The issue seems a less pressing matter to resolve, perhaps because of the

[57] See Appendix 19 where research in a modern setting can offer new explanations for historical conduct.
[58] Alan O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour in Britain, 1846-1922, in Panikos Panayi (ed.), *Racial Violence in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (London 1996) p. 27

difficulty in so doing, in urbanities where fewer Irish, by their low numbers, though feasibly inclined to cluster, could not manifest themselves in significant sized cumulations.

Questioning of method has become more acute. To purport a study location as having typicality, or its Irish content as having wider representativeness, may quickly attract disputation. Hickman has bemoaned the fixation with the need for the most minute investigation e.g. of measurement of in- and out-migration to explain decennial variation in city totals of Irish. She has sought for less exceptionalism with more emphasis on Irish evaluation occurring within the broader social nexus. There is greater awareness of the nature of cultural upholding among migrants. There had appeared an unconscious expectation that the Irish should be on a trajectory towards assimilation and evidence for its occurrence was keenly sought, with measurements of social and residential mobility for the first generation even over a decade, closely scrutinised.[59]

In the case of the Irish the process of convergence with the norms of the population and cultural adaptation in so far as it can be assessed, reveals itself now as a more inter-generational process, dependent on local ambience and not as rapidly completed as might be assumed. There has been greater conceptual clarification coupled with the recognition that the Irish experience was complicated and diverse, varying in time and place; see Pooley below. This latter-day ability to tease out and rank the important strands in the process with sophisticated incision has been epitomised by MacRaild. He reminded that in a local study, consciousness must be kept of two tiers of influence at play; overarching national attitudes and also local influences. He stated:

> 'The variation in the nature of Irish communities, and the cultural nuances in the towns they settled, threw up a bewildering array of sub-plots in the story of how Anglo-Irish relations unfolded in the regions. At the same time, larger questions of nation, religion and economy remained at the heart of English perceptions of Irishness… The permeation of violence towards and between the Irish throughout the Anglo-Irish relationship was a profound reality that influenced these perceptions'.[60]

In 2011, Swift outlined the present state of historical enquiry and declared the debate is now more refined and complex. Investigation according to him now features interest in 'change, continuity, resistance and accommodation'[61] Topics that appeared as fringe concerns to mid-century analyses become more central to those exploring its later quarter. The extent, identity and role of the children of the Irish-born, casually assumed in earlier centred studies as intrinsically Irish, but who, by the closing decades, as

---

[59] L.H. Lees, Patterns of lower-class life: Irish slum Communities in nineteenth century London, in S. Thernstrom & R. Sennett (eds.), *Nineteenth century cities*, (New Haven 1969) pp. 368-374
[60] MacRaild, *Culture, Conflict and Migration*, pp. 12, 13
[61] Swift, Identifying the Irish in Victorian Britain, pp. 6-23

adults, are the embodiment of a perceived Irish community require illumination. Panayi remarked in 2014 that 'most of the scholarship on the nineteenth century Irish focuses upon [the first generation] as one experiencing poverty and deprivation, without taking a longer term perspective. The historiography of the nineteenth-century Irish, dominated by the three Swift and Gilley volumes and focussing on the first generation seems largely unaware of their offspring'.[62] Fitzpatrick was a notable exception and observed 'it was no longer expatriates and particularly the Famine generation of transient and impermanent migrants that dictated the characteristics of the Irish 'community' but a more shadowy and less aberrant population of the second generation'[63]. This second generation mostly born in Britain without the identifying marker in the census of an Irish-born parent are difficult to track and the demographic outline of the 'community' becomes obscure.

Recognised too is that 'en bloc' decennial structured analyses have their place, but being in place, have shown that the ongoing nature of the migrant experience requires more exposition than decennial stocktaking can provide. Herson is of the view that censual aggregation results in generalisations and fails to explain motivation. He lauds family history for its ability to provide this motivation and richness of experience but recognises in this approach the serious problems of lack of evidence and the generalising from the particular.[64] In relation to this study and others, in so far as 'family setting' durational evidence can be obtained, it realistically has to be sought from the censuses. Present-day electronic facilitation for searching and cross-referencing census data has assisted the process, but it only offers illumination on an individual by individual family name basis. Any more widespread family name tracking is a Herculian task with the added risk of straying into genealogical labyrinths. Thus this procedure cannot realistically furnish a comprehensive database on which to found a study. It is only possible for some carefully selected examples of migrant family undergoings, to be furnished to illuminate census statistics. However in the introduction of any usage of illustrative migrant family record there is the risk of attracting the precipitous discredit of disciplinary purists. The view of academic historians was spelled out by Light: 'professional historians have generally given family history short

---

[62] Panikos Panayi, *An Immigration History of Britain, Multicultural Racism since 1800*, (Abingdon, Oxon 2014) p. 86

[63] Fitzpatrick D., A curious middle place: the Irish in Britain, 1871-1921, in Gilley S. and Swift R. (eds), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989) pp. 13, 18

[64] John Herson, Migration, 'community' or integration? Irish families in Victorian Stafford, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain*, (London 1999) p. 167

shrift. It's 'history lite' or comfort-zone history; solipsistic and myopic'.[65] It is here argued the opportunity should be taken to seek out some representative families, given the electronic facilitation only recently available to permit inter-censal tracking, the family lattice nature binding this study, and the arresting possibilities in migrant family analysis that Herson has identified.[66]

This background chapter then sets out the statistical profile of the Irish in Coventry and considers the size of the city's Irish-born within a national urban perspective. There is reflection on both the representativeness and reliability of totals provided in census tabulations. The value of the census as primary source, will be raised, since any seeking for an Irish community encapsulation has to be achieved in the census through birthplace mention and the relationship of those who share households with Irish-born. Migrant studies have been commonly supported and framed on Irish-born data. In some a sentence, but often no more, acknowledging an awareness of the fact that with local-born children added, figures for an Irish community might be doubled, has been considered suffice to provide dimension to the community. The unfulfilling nature of such a procedure will be explained. Thus the gathering process to collect not just Irish-born but all those who can be identified as having an Irish association and may convey a 'community' will then be outlined.

The chapter then moves to consider the strength of the sources made available by the migrants and their contemporaries and how tendentious were the latter. There follows an appraisal of the role, content and consistency of attention given to the Irish over the century by relevant newspapers. Along with the census their pages are relied on to informationally anchor this study, but they also convey prejudicial stereotyping and polemic shaping of local sentiment. Their different journalistic approaches which changed over the century will be noted and an attempt will be made to tell from them what the Coventrian disposition towards the Irish was.

1.1 The historiography of the Irish in nineteenth century Britain

Awakening of interest and sectors of enquiry

Ó Tuathaigh remarked that scholarly exploration of sources on the migrant experience in nineteenth century Britain only seriously commenced in the 1960s. J.A. Jackson's 1963 seminal study of the Irish in Britain is regarded as marking the new era

[65] Alison Light, *Common People*, (London 2014) p. xxvii

[66] Demeaners of the worthiness of some measure of family intergenerational plotting fail to explain how without even some recourse to it the generations that followed the Famine migrants, commonly perceived as in an uncharted twilight, can ever be descried.

of investigation.[67] Thereafter interest continued to gain momentum, lifted by a newly found popular enthusiasm to understand the outlook and clarify the happenings of the Victorian age.[68]

The awakened interest and countering of earlier neglect was facilitated by the increased availability of ancestral detail from a sequence of censuses emerging from their hibernation during the 'hundred year rule'. This was coupled with the ability of the computer database to store, organise and cross-tabulate pieces of data gathered on every individual enumerated. Also in recent times, because of research into the outcomes of modern transnational migrations, there has been greater understanding of migrant dynamics, and what has ensued has been an interest in freshly interpreting, with this new acumen, earlier migrant behaviours and host responses. A recounting and interpretation of the experience of nineteenth century Irish migrants in Britain involves an exploration of many interwoven strands of enquiry. These strands, relating to the social, cultural, religious and economic circumstances of the migrants in varied size urban settings, have in recent years received comprehensive attention from historians. Particular dimensions of the Irish experience, e.g. relating to crime and riot, cultural identity, estrangement and adaptation, have become niche themes which have attracted keen and specialised interest. The facetted Victorian age in which migrant experience must be contextualised, has been subject to detailed explanation. Its intense urbanisation and its rapidly growing population, with their occupations and classes, lifestyles and religious fervours, have been thoroughly examined.

So too has the age's inculcated self-image. British society envisioned itself as not only authentic and ideal, but also superior. In the construction of this elevated national identity the Irish migrants were represented as its antithesis; they served as Other. What followed was, antagonism, prejudice and misappropriated blame, directed towards the migrants. Research abounds on the detail of this condescension, probably directed specifically at the 'low' Irish, yet nevertheless when the Irish were referenced in collective terms, the popular disrespect attached indiscriminately to all 'Irish'.

---

[67] M.A.G. Ó Tuathaigh, The Irish in nineteenth century Britain: problems of integration, in S. Gilley and R. Swift (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City*, (London 1985) p. 13; J.A. Jackson, *The Irish in Britain*, (London 1963). See also: J.E. Handley, *The Irish in Scotland, 1798-1945*, (Cork 1943) and J.E. Handley, *The Irish in Modern Scotland*, (Cork 1947)

[68] This was a recent age, lived in by an antepenultimate generation, with its earlier - and continuing - importance still evident in infrastructure, buildings and laws. However as measured by the standards of later twentieth century modernity it was regarded as having passed into antiquity and so its character aroused historical enquiry.

The migrant story has been presented qualitatively, quantitatively or jointly in a complimentary balance of both; the decision on the nature of approach swayed by the availability of source material as much as by the interest of the researcher. All these fields of investigation and modes of enquiry have contributed to a now expansive body of work relating to Irish residence in Britain.

Migrant reference in general and local histories of Britain

The level of significance attached to the account of the privations of the Irish nineteenth century Famine, its inadequate alleviation by the state and subsequent crisis migration to Britain was such that it was usually allocated only a chapter, or portion thereof, in chronological or thematic monographs narrating British history. Therein, Irish stereotypes developed from partial accounts of conditions in 'Irish Quarters' and 'Little Irelands' were recited readily, and the old reliable accusations, e.g. the Irish playing a role in lowering both wages and the standard of living, were aired.[69] Redford writing in 1926 about what he termed the 'disastrous social effect of the Irish influx' stated:

> 'The Irish in Great Britain…retained their native practice of keeping pigs in the house. With this lower standard of living went a lower efficiency as workmen, and a worse moral tone. The Irish were less provident, and were more given to drunkenness; they were slovenly, careless, and stupid… They formed a submerged class, always tending to drag their neighbours to a lower level of living'.[70]

Writing later in the century Hobsbawn devoted three page lengths to a fair recount of Irish migration but in one sentence became highly summative: 'Their [Irish] wages were lower than anyone else's, they lived in the worst slums, and the English and Scots despised them as semi-barbarians, distrusted them as Catholics and hated them as undercutters of their wages'.[71] Even when being more positive about the immigrants, there was casual stereotyping by historians such as Ashton, who referred in 1948 to the migrants as having 'Celtic impetuosity [and] impatience of authority'.[72] Beyond describing that period of concern, many general historical studies had, for too long seen Irish migrants as homogenous and their migration, always referred to as an 'influx', as largely marginal to the narrative sweep of the nineteenth century.

It was realised by scholars as the twentieth century progressed that the earlier migrant contribution to social change and the urban landscape, had been neglected or had been reduced to axioms, such as the Irish lived apart, were found in deprived

[69] Arthur Redford, *Labour Migration in England 1800-1850*, (Manchester 1926) p. 159
[70] Ibid., pp. 159, 160
[71] E.J. Hobsbawn, *Industry and Empire*, (London 1968) p. 294
[72] T.S. Ashton, *The Industrial Revolution 1760-1830*, (London 1948) p. 124

conditions, were strike-breakers or undercut wage rates. This neglect of interest in the nineteenth century Irish was apparent too in historic accounts of municipalities as shown for Coventry and similarly observed by Moran for Birmingham.[73] The older civic histories were usually of the 'upward and onward' uncritical style, that depicted the character and progress of a specific city, as rooted in the proud traditions, skills, reputation and past achievements particular to the municipality, with little room for negativity inducing accounts of Irish deprivations. McKinley's reference to the Irish in *The City of Leicester: Social and administrative history since 1835* (1958) amounted to: 'Irish immigrants, in Leicester as elsewhere, were a source of trouble. They tended to concentrate in one part of St. Margaret's parish, around Belgrave Gate and Abbey Gate, and the houses that they occupied there were often overcrowded'.[74] Modern civic accounts of Coventry, including the respected *Victoria County History* (1969) did not refer to them at all.[75] Neither were they mentioned in the deeply researched study on Coventry, 1820-1861 by Searby.[76] Even an academic study in 1989 pertaining to Irish migrants appeared to miss or relegate the significance of their presence in nineteenth century Coventry. That study, albeit of the twentieth century Irish in Coventy, while providing an introductory perspective covering the scale and local destination of Irish migration to nineteenth century Britain, failed in that prelude to so much as mention, the presence of over 700 Irish-born in Victorian Coventry.[77]

The widening and maturing of the body of knowledge

Swift referred to a renaissance in the historiography of the Irish in Britain in late twentieth century. The extent of what he saw as a burgeoning historiography has been comprehensively detailed by MacRaild.[78] This corpus of literature encapsulates a wide variety of format and styles. Mention may be made first of those that are generally

---

[73] James Moran, *Irish Birmingham*, (Liverpool 2010) pp. 3, 4

[74] R.A. McKinley (ed.), The City of Leicester: Social and administrative history since 1835, *A History of the County of Leicester: Volume 4: The City of Leicester, VCH/British History Online*, (London 1958) pp. 251-274

[75] P.W. Bunce, *The Story of Coventry*, (Stroud 2013); David McGrory, *A History of Coventry*, (Stroud 2004)
'The City of Coventry: Social history from 1700', in W.B. Stephens (ed.), *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (London 1969) pp. 222-241. URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16030 Accessed: 21st October 2014.
'The City of Coventry: Roman Catholicism', *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (London 1969) pp. 368-371. URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16030 Accessed: 21st October 2014.

[76] Searby, Weavers and freemen pp. 1-647

[77] Russel King, John Shuttleworth and Alan Strachan, The Irish in Coventry: the Social Geography of a Relict Community, *Irish Geography*, Vol. 22, Issue 2, (1989) pp. 64-78

[78] Roger Swift (ed.), *Irish Migrants in Britain 1815-1914*, (Cork 2002) p. xvii; Donald M. MacRaild, *Irish Migrants in Modern Britain, 1750-1922*, (Basingstoke 1999). See his Bibliographical Essay pp. 210-219

descriptive and overview narrations. They outline the scale of migration, the forces of push and pull, points of entry and destinations, migrant demographic and behavioural characteristics, the challenges faced and responses made in settling.

Such is Jackson's monograph *The Irish in Britain* (1963) which is regarded as having opened the present era of study. John Hickey in *Urban Catholics* (1967) brought an early sociological understanding to the position and experience of Catholics in England and Wales from 1829 to 1965, whose numbers were bolstered by Irish immigrants. In 1981 Ó Tuathaigh offered a rounded if 'standard' description of the state of the migrant Irish, noted the slow improvement, and the spectrum of forces that until the end of the nineteenth century preserved cultural distance and hindered assimilation.[79] His impressive essay was described as the classic overview by Peach and as magisterial by Swift.[80] Fitzpatrick considered the migrant experience for the period 1801-1870 and noted that in historians' attention to the Catholic majority, there was a neglect of coverage of the minority of migrant Protestants. He referred to a migrant condition of 'perpetual transience' nationally and within cities, and observed that this restless mobility had been masked by the statistical stability of the migrant settlement pattern. Fitzpatrick observed that the infamously reputed Irish quarters of British towns were almost never exclusively Irish. While in some cities there was a monopoly of Irish in certain streets, they had not been confined to them and shoehorning Irish concentrations into a 'ghetto' model was not appropriate.[81] His sequential overview of migrant experience from 1871-1921, contained in its title the phrase 'a curious middle place' which has been often employed by historians to epitomize the position of that migrant generation. He noted Britain was still a destination for the Irish towards the end of the century.[82] However there was a slow decline in numbers, because while net immigration was voluminous, it was not sufficient to replenish falling Irish-born figures caused by the passing away of the mid-century influx on its reaching old age. The 'Little Ireland' types of concentration of Irish had disappeared due to municipal slum clearances, construction of new railway stations and the creation of prestige streets such as Corporation Street in Birmingham. This elimination of those decrepit areas had led to

---

[79] M.A.G. Ó Tuathaigh, The Irish in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Problems of Integration, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Fifth Series, Vol. 31 (1981) pp. 149-173

[80] Alexander Peach, Review of *The Irish in Victorian Britain: the Local Dimension*, (review no. 128) http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/128 Accessed: 19 September, 2014; Roger Swift, The historiography of the Irish in nineteenth-century Britain, in Patrick O'Sullivan (ed.), *The Irish in the New Communities*, (London 1992) p. 63

[81] David Fitzpatrick, A peculiar tramping people, the Irish in Britain, 1801-70, in W.E.Vaughan (ed.), *A New History of Ireland, Vol 5*, (Oxford 1989) pp. 623-660

[82] Fitzpatrick, A curious middle place, pp. 11-59
Phrase from Felix Lavery, (compiler) *Irish Heroes in the War*, (London 1917) p. 32

a dispersal of the Irish and a loss of location where an Irish sense of community might have been prolonged. It was a population with an older age profile, whose social status was improving, but still over-represented in crime and pauperism statistics. While more integrated into a working class way of life they did not share a close bond with the class. Their children were born in Britain and their own material attachment was less to Ireland as the years passed. Their reduced numbers meant they were less visible and attracted less animosity. The seething hatreds of the earlier century had mellowed, though migrants could still face hostility, which fed their sense of grievance. Fitzpatrick assumed that inter-marriage did not become common after mid-century. He did not see them as a segregated community who were 'locked in an ethnic defensiveness' but neither as a cohesive Irish community, since there were divisions 'between those who tried to replant their Irish culture in Britain, those who created a hybrid immigrant culture and those who did their best to 'forget' that they were Irish'.[83]

The immense contribution of Swift with Gilley, of their own account and through their editorship, has provided the backbone to migration research in Britain.[84] Apart from their personal research, the essay style contents of the three influential volumes, which they jointly edited, exhibit not only the extent of historiographic development and conceptual sophistication but also the breadth and scope of scholarly enquiry.[85] A feature of the third volume was the interest in the local dimension, and the detection of the diversity of experience, shaped by the variety of settings in which migrants settled. It was clear that an historigraphical assumption of a 'one-account, fits all sizes' approach, derived from patterns in large urban areas, did not sufficiently allow for the influence of local circumstances.

Essays in the first volume *The Irish in the Victorian City* (1985) covered locations with large Irish concentrations: Bristol, London, Wolverhampton, Stockport, Liverpool and York.[86] For the latter city Finnegan described the conditions of poverty endured by the Irish in its slums, and with the exception of Large's study of Bristol, her essay with

---

[83] Fitzpatrick, A curious middle place, pp. 30, 44

[84] The following syntheses are enlightening: Swift, *Irish Migrants 1815-1914*; MacRaild, *Irish Migrants 1750-1922*; Graham Davis, *The Irish in Britain 1815-1914*, (Dublin 1991). O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour pp. 26-43 provides a concise thoughtful review. So also in his two essays does David Fitzpatrick: (1) A peculiar tramping people pp. 623-660 & (2) A curious middle place, pp. 11-59

[85] Sheridan Gilley, English Attitudes to the Irish in England, 1780-1900, in Colin Holmes (ed.), *Immigrants and Minorities in British Society*, (London 1978) pp. 81-109
Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City*, (London 1985)
Sheridan Gilley & Roger Swift (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989)
Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain*, (London 1999)
Swift, Irish Migrants 1815-1914,
Swift, Identifying the Irish in Victorian Britain, pp. 6-23

[86] Patsy Davis, *Green Ribbons: The Irish in Birmingham in the 1860s A Study of Housing, Work and Policing*, Master of Philosophy Diss. University of Birmingham 2003 p. 1

the others, appeared to accept and confirm the received wisdom of the time that the Irish were outcasts and 'apart' for at least much of the century. In their sequel volume *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939* (1989) studies were presented, among others, by Herson, Swift, and Pooley. The latter's contribution of *'Segregation or integration? The residential experience of the Irish in mid-Victorian Britain'* questioned the assumptions on which historians were approaching migration topics. He examined the conceptual state of migrant investigation and peeled back enquiry to see if the fundamental assumptions of investigation were sound. He identified four areas of concern as listed:
1. That research on large centres provided an incomplete picture of urban response. 2. There was such over-emphasis on the experience of the poor Catholic Irish majority that it served to obscure the existence of a minority of significance. 3. An emphasis on the majority had led to an over-concern with the clusters of Irish and to the neglect of the Irish in the wider town area. 4. He observed 'any attempt to measure segregation objectively is itself illusory as the spatial framework within which measurement takes place will fundamentally affect the outcome. Since his reasoning that created his concern on the first two practices has been adopted as justification for this analysis of Coventry a short elaboration of these important principles is shown in Appendix 17. There also, is a short explanation of his final two points, relating to his interpretation of how Irish spatial pattern is defined and assessed, since they are mainstays of guidance in approaching this Coventrian exploration.

Swift's and Gilley's third volume *The Irish in Victorian Britain: The Local Dimension* (1999) continued to explore the Irish migrant experience through coverage of diverse themes, such as the provision of Catholic education, unanticipated flare-up of rioting, or the nature of the Irish middle class. These were exampled in a region, county, or city, and the influence of such a setting, be it unexpectedly not a leading Irish destination, but Camborne, Stafford, or Hull, was considered on the topic under discussion. Miskell stressed 'local and regional conditions provide a much more meaningful context in which to assess the impact of immigrant populations' and from her study of Camborne concluded small Irish populations may have more significance locally than might appear from their lower position in the hierarchy of 'size' of Irish populations in urban areas. She noted local factors, rather than, as might be anticipated, traditional causes such as innate anti-Irishness, religious tension, labour disputes or political difference, were responsible for the Camborne riot in 1882.[87]

[87] Louise Miskell, Irish immigrants in Cornwall: the Camborne experience, 1861-82, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain*, (London 1999) pp. 31-51 Quotation p. 51

Thematic approaches

There is a wealth of studies, usually pinned to a location, that relate specifically to the position or experience of the migrant group in the nineteenth century. They range over migrants' spatial expression, social standing, cultural characteristics, identity, involvement in crime, religious affiliation, or adjustment to the host society. For example, Busteed described the powerful British cultural forces, which combined with Irish social mobility, to propel the Irish towards the host society's 'respectable' norms.[88] Gilley examined the 'Paddy' national stereotype and suggested that the English and the Irish manufactured it jointly, albeit by the latter as a self-defensive means of disarming prejudice.[89] Gilley has particularly authored on a religious theme.[90] He questioned if the modern secular mind had the capability to understand how deep the belief of the Catholic migrant ran. He stated while the lay Irish formed the bulk of congregations, authority was maintained by an English Catholic clerical minority. This was a phenomenon that was present in Coventry. Despite their contribution to the erection of fine churches he noted how hidden Irish Catholic sentiment was within the Church. He noted the later Victorian Church gave purpose and sanction to those who sought respectability and even those who did not engage in orthodox Catholic practice may still have been influenced by older Celtic church values. He saw as the century drew to a close that the Church had brought about a migrant community that was more Catholic than Irish.[91]

Later in 2011, Gilley noting the complication of the subject, examined English Catholic attitudes to Irish Catholics. The enormous task of ministering to the stressed Irish on their arrival was a distraction from the clergy's desired mission to convert England. The Irish were little credited as Irish and seen as the poor by the Church establishment. His essay suggested the attitude of many English lay-Catholics towards the Catholic Irish, mirrored that of the English population without the anti-Catholicism and was a mixture of hostility and indifference.[92]

The Swift and Gilley trilogy provided a trove of themed essays. As an example Swift considered the causes of crime in Wolverhampton, and the management by the

---

[88] M. Busteed, Resistance and Respectability: Dilemmas of Irish migrant politics in Victorian Britain in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *Irish Identities in Victorian Britain*, (Abingdon 2011) p. 61
[89] Gilley, English Attitudes, p. 84
[90] Gilley, Roman Catholicism, pp. 147-167
[91] The following works in conjunction with Gilley provide fuller understanding of Anti-Catholicism: E.R. Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England*, (London 1968); John Wolffe, *The Protestant Crusade in Great Britain 1829-1860*, (Oxford 1991); Denis G. Paz, *Popular Anti-Catholicism in Mid-Victorian England*, (Stanford 1992); John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community 1570-1850*, (London 1995)
[92] Sheridan Gilley, English Catholic Attitudes to Irish Catholics, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *Irish Identities in Victorian Britain*, (Abingdon 2011) pp. 100-119

police of the Irish who were involved, in the oft quoted *'Another Stafford Street Row': Law, Order and the Irish Presence in mid-Victorian Wolverhampton*. A second essay *Crime and the Irish in nineteenth-century Britain* brought his considerations to a wider canvas.[93] He observed public opinion in Britain over a long period associated the Irish with crime. The Victorian belief in the innate criminality of the Irish was a negative element of the Irish stereotype. It was an axiomatic link that stretched across the gamut from begging, thieving, vagrancy, drunkenness, fighting, town disorder, hostility to authority, and to rioting.

An invaluable insight into Irish crime in Coventry 1845-75 was provided by Mulkern. He described the problematic state of relations between the Irish and Coventry authorities, due to excessive drinking and brawling, which was particularly caused by the disorderly behaviour of four notorious Irish families.[94] Otherwise his essay depicted impassive Irish and provided crucial confirmation to this study of the absence of pronounced tension involving the Irish during the years of Emancipation, Young Ireland movement, Papal Aggression and Fenian outrage.[95]

Local studies: format, compatibility, target area and population

Of special interest to this study is the development and style of local studies. Comprehensive micro-studies address migrant response at urban level, through the customary arrangement of chapters or headings on migrant characteristics and behaviour, housing conditions and spatial settlement, demographic structure, occupation, social status, formal religious provision, cultural politics and community relations. Usually aired are the underlining issues such as cultural distance, self-segregation, socio-economic and intergenerational mobility, conflict, crime and host alarm or prejudice.

In county studies, a number of towns may be selected for group attention - four in the case of Cumbria and seven in Lancashire.[96] The census-based approach of these studies varies from the use of city summary statistics, with perhaps an illustrative street or area more closely examined, to using statistics aggregated at ward, parish, or

---

[93] Roger Swift, Crime and the Irish in nineteenth-century Britain, in Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989) pp. 163-182; See also: Roger Swift, *Crime and society in Wolverhampton, 1815-1860*, (Wolverhampton 1987)

[94] Paul Mulkern, Irish Immigrants and Public Disorder in Coventry 1845-1875, in *Midland History*, 21 (1996) pp. 129-135

[95] Coventry was a major silk manufacturing town and the experience of domestic weavers from Dublin in the similarly engaged Macclesfield and Congleton that was outlined by Williams, is a most relevant example of a themed study. (F.J. Williams, Irish in the East Cheshire silk industry, 1851 -1861 *Journal of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, Vol. 136 (1987) pp. 99-126) There were 628 Irish-born in Congleton, 2.0% of city population in 1851.

[96] MacRaild, *Culture, Conflict and Migration*; Lowe, *Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire*

direction labelled district level. There is regrettably no direct compatibility between most of these self –contained studies. Some study conclusions, e.g. of Lees on London, Lowe on Lancashire, and Davis on Birmingham rest, not on details of the entire target population, but on samples of varying size which represent occupational or other standings. The systematic sampling method employed may, according to the wishes of each researcher, have different selection intervals. Again, for both, their findings rest on a selection of neighbourhoods or streets in the older part of the city centre where the presence of Irish caught the attention of the researchers, but the findings, although of interest, may not have wider representativeness.[97] Several rest on an exhaustive analysis of a single census, usually of 1851 or 1861, while others, e.g. Lees on London, or Dillon on Leeds, centre their statistical presentation on two or more censuses.[98] With this arrangement, an extra obstacle to compatibility has been varying intercensal comparison intervals; some of a decade, others of a score. Lobban on Greenock and Dillon on Leeds are early examples of researchers with a divergent temporal span.[99] Also studies vary according to the socio-economic classifications employed - which have on occasion been modified by a researcher to suit local circumstances.

Mismatching of studies also occurs where intercensal analysis is based on whether the curiosity of a researcher, centred enquiry, around either the Famine generation years or for a period stretching later into the nineteenth century. In former type studies - usually the vintage surveys, the concern related to origin and impact, e.g. the degree of overcrowding and clustering of a largely fresh migrant cultural grouping. In later studies interest centred on adjustment, as measured by e.g. occupational mobility and the degree of second-generation inter-marriage of those in a longer settled group, whose only entitlement to inclusion in the Irish 'community' total might have a been a census record showing the presence in their household of an aged Irish-born parent. Caution is thus necessary if comparison is made between Irish 'community' totals in separated temporal settings, since 'community' quanta could embody Irish with dissimilar group characteristics. The fact remains that while many scholars produce community based

[97] L.H. Lees, *Exiles of Erin: Irish migrants in Victorian London*, (Cornell 1979) pp. 251, 252; Lowe, *Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire*; Davis, *Green Ribbons*

[98] Lees, *Exiles of Erin*, p. 251; T. Dillon, The Irish in Leeds 1851-1861, *Thoresby Society Publications Miscellany*, 16 (1974) pp. 1-28

[99] The former felt his study was best served when census figures were called upon to compare the Irish of 1851 with those of 1891, while the latter compared census detail from 1851 with that of a decade later. Both are rounded studies, faithful to the time-frames stated in their titles. However because of the contrasting census time spans to which they refer, the inferences drawn by either scholar, lack comparability. (R.D. Lobban, The Irish community in Greenock in the nineteenth century, *Irish Geography*, 6 No 3 (1971) pp. 270-281)

statistics, the only statistical idiom permitting universal comparison is that of 'Irish-born'.

Range and scope of local studies

Local studies usually at a municipal, but also at county level, have been produced on areas stretching from Cornwall to Cumbria.[100] With Irish-born totals for 1851 in brackets, shown here are examples of the different dimensions of Irish local settlement that have been researched: Liverpool (83,813), Huddersfield (1,562) and Swindon (75).[101] Monographs about the Victorian era Irish in specific areas have been written, among others, by Lees on London, Lowe on Lancashire, Fielding on Manchester, Finnegan on York, MacRaild on Cumbria, Belchem on Liverpool and Herson on Stafford.[102] Constriction of format permits only the briefest reference to three of these examples of influential published research:

W.J. Lowe in *The Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire: The Shaping of a Working-Class Community* (1989) comprehensively explored the conditions, characteristics and spatial exclusivity of the Irish in seven Lancashire industrialised towns. He saw the migrants as possessing a deeper distinctiveness than the ragged clothes, accents and non-civic behaviours would suggest; it was a distinctiveness that was a 'manifestation of the development of a coherent community life'.[103] However by the 1870s he, argued, the community had become less distinct and difficult to portray.[104] He remarked that while a reason for the Irish living in close proximity would have been the reassuring presence of other migrants, it was overridden by the availability of poor quality houses at a cheap rent. He stated:

> 'In an important sense the Irish did, indeed, occupy a ghetto, but one that was less geographical and the result of deliberate segregation than an economic ghetto formed by the constraints on their financial means. The housing that they occupied was the housing that their occupational status permitted them to rent'.[105]

Frances Finnegan's, *Poverty & Prejudice: A Study of Irish Immigrants in York 1840-1875* (1982) powerfully portrayed the 'classic' conditions of prejudice, isolation,

---

[100] Miskell, Irish immigrants in Cornwall, pp. 31-51; MacRaild, Culture, Conflict and Migration

[101] John Belchem, *Irish, Catholic and Scouse*, (Liverpool 2007); Esther Maria, Moriarty The Great Famine - an Irish tragedy and its impact on the English town of Huddersfield from 1845-1861, Doctoral thesis, University of Huddersfield. (2010); Brown, Irish Railway Workers, pp. 48-73; Swift, Identifying the Irish in Victorian Britain, p. 9

[102] Lees, *Exiles of Erin*, Lowe, *Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire*; Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity: Irish Catholics in England, 1880-1938*, (Buckingham, 1993); Frances Finnegan, *Poverty & Prejudice: A Study of Irish Immigrants in York 1840-1875*, (Cork 1982); MacRaild, *Culture, Conflict and Migration*; Belchem, *Irish, Catholic and Scouse*; John Herson, *Divergent paths: Family Histories of Irish Emigrants in Britain* 1820-1920, (Manchester 2015).

[103] Lowe, *Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire*, p. 203

[104] Ibid., p. 211

[105] Ibid., pp. 68-69

squalor, transience and alienation endured in York, but its ghetto-type focus on the Famine centred years lessens it value as a model for city-wide or centurial investigation.

John Herson's, *Divergent paths: Family Histories of Irish Emigrants in Britain* 1820-1920 (2015) was described by O'Neill as unlike anything else in the canon of Irish migrant studies, and has been the culmination of decades of research.[106] It is a new approach focused on Irish families in Stafford and in documenting the life stories of a representative sample, aims to understand the experience of migrants in a more constructive manner.[107] The outcome of his technique allows him to challenge common notions of Irish migrants as exiles, victims or opportunists, and to see as simplistic previous interpretations of the interaction between the Irish and the host population as imbued with strain. His ability to outline and clarify issues e.g. on the persistence of ethnic identity together with his considerations on the methodology employed in family based analysis makes this a powerful manual, that will widen the conceptual horizons of historical researchers, apart altogether from his informative findings. His exploration prompted him to suggest that within the specific environmental context of Stafford 'the processes of identity formation and social interaction' led to many different outcomes for families who he found fitted into three categories: long-term transients, terminal families, and integrating families.[108]

Essays on specific urban areas

Essays of the 'Irish settlement in a city' genre tend to have been written during a period after the late sixties when establishing the basic picture in a city was of interest. They are largely descriptive and focused on the years to mid-century, when rates of migrant inflow were high and host animosity had not yet mellowed. Also influenced by the historical approach of the time, they concentrated on the clustered Irish and the dilapidated conditions where the majority of Irish lived. Such was Werly's study on 'The Irish in Manchester 1832-49' (1973). Richardson in 1968 studied Irish settlement in Bradford from 1825 to 1851. Nearby in Leeds, Dillon in 1974 considered the experience of the Irish population which stood at 8,466 Irish-born, 4.9% of city population in 1851.[109] In 1971 Lobban saw the Irish in Greenock as having formed

[106] Ciaran O'Neill, Review of Divergent Paths by John Herson, in *The Economic History Review*, Vol 69, 2 May 2016 pp. 718-719.
[107] Herson's bottom-up family approach which would surely endorse the facilitation offered by electronic cross-referencing of census data, it is suggested has not been welcomed by some historians. They may be reluctant to see the approach as quite within the confines of historiographic discipline, as smacking of genealogy, or that it might be perceived as over-straying from the convention of drawing conclusions based on aggregates.
[108] Herson, *Divergent paths*, p. 4
[109] Dillon, Irish in Leeds, pp. 1-28

distinctive communities in the nineteenth century.[110] Large found the Irish in 1851 underwent a different experience in Bristol. In it prior to the Famine there were 4,039 Irish-born (3.3% of city population). Between 1841 and 1851 the Irish-born population rose by 15% to reach 4,645 (3.4% of the city population). However relative to Birmingham which doubled its Irish-born numbers in the same decade Bristol did not experience a large influx of Irish. In an era influenced by 'outcast and apartness' orthodoxy, where the findings for York received popular attention, Large courageously pointed out, that in Bristol there was a high degree of intermarriage between the Irish and the non-Irish. This he saw as evidence that there was not the rigid separation often claimed between the Irish and the local inhabitants. He drew attention to the fact that contemporary reports in Bristol barely mentioned the Irish even though 4,039 Irish-born were recorded in 1841. The absence of comment on the Irish in Bristol indicated to him that the migrants were relatively inconspicuous. There was in fact no Bristol ghetto and while concentrated in particular streets and courts the Irish were scattered widely throughout the city.[111] His findings that suggested a relatively harmonious Irish experience could exist there, raise for this study consideration of the possibility that aspects of his conclusions may similarly apply to Coventry.

A more recent essay by Murphy in 1994, on the Irish in Nottingham, where the 1,557 Irish-born formed 2.7% of the total population, showed some interesting parallels with Coventry.[112] The town was constricted by common lands which led to dense back-to-back and court yard housing of inferior quality. It was a leading hosiery centre but trade fluctuated and workers could be unemployed. The Irish presence in its army barracks could unbalance the age-sex distribution of Irish in the city. Dublin workers who had lost their livelihoods due to the flood of cheap imports were attracted to it. In 1851 the evidence suggested that these Dubliners had been overtaken in number by an influx of Famine migrants from Ireland's western counties. He remarked that there appears to have been an absence of conflict as the migrants were too few in number to pose 'either an economic, cultural, or political threat to the status quo'.[113]

---

[110] Lobban, Irish in Greenock, pp. 270-281
The number of Irish-born in Greenock is not shown in Census Tables for 1851. There were 4,307 Irish-born, representing 11.7% of town's population in 1841 and 6,188 Irish-born (Parliamentary Burgh), representing 14.1% of town's population in 1861.

[111] D. Large, The Irish in Bristol in 1851: a census enumeration, in S. Gilley & R. Swift (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian city*, (London 1985) pp. 37-58. Large confined his study to Irish-born although in his analysis of Irish occupations he includes children (aged 5-12 inclusive) born in Britain provided one or both parents were Irish-born.

[112] Patrick Murphy, Irish settlement in Nottingham in the early nineteenth century, *Transactions of the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire*, Vol XCVIII 1994 pp. 82-91

[113] Ibid., p. 90

Irish experience in small sized urban areas with similarities to Coventry

York's treatment by Finnegan, which had a total population size the same as Coventry has already been referred to. Chester where 27,766 persons of whom 2,032 (7.3%) were Irish-born in 1851, had some similarities with a pre-industrialised York and a domestic-industrial Coventry, and was the subject of an essay by Jeffes in 1996.[114] Her essay concerned with the 1840s and 50s has relevance to small town analysis where the extent of segregation and cultural distance may be more difficult to pronounce on, than for large urban centres. She depicted Chester as a small city close to a more regionally dominant Liverpool, with an especial calmness of Irish experience that Moriarty noted for Huddersfield, in proximity to a predominant Bradford and Leeds, opening for consideration that an analogous Irish phenomenon applied to Coventry within the orbit of Birmingham. She provided evidence of greater intermarriage with the native population, and thus greater integration, beyond Steven Street, in St. John's parish where there was an 'inordinate concentration' of Irish-born.[115] She suggested Steven Street was a reception street with mobile young male lodgers moving on to other work-offering urban locations or dispersing to other streets in Chester. She stressed her distinct unease with the use of the term 'Irish community' beyond the parish of St. John.

John Herson wrote three prominent essays about Irish settlement in Stafford.[116] In his second essay which was a precursor to his unique monograph mentioned earlier, he was anxious to move beyond the bareness of census statistics and to present, based on migrants' personal encounters, a richer insight into their differing experience and motivation. He provided details on the family history of a number of named families. He noted nuclear and extended family units were a key social institution and family cohesion was of importance. However his first essay which viewed Stafford from a small town perspective requires elaboration here. It is an archetypal study of the smaller urban area with relatively low in-migration from which guidance may be gleaned from its analytical approach on how to handle an examination of Coventry and its Irish.[117] He justified Stafford as his choice of location on the basis of its typicality as a small town and its very ordinariness. He saw the town as a microcosm of nineteenth century England; it was a county town, a transport centre, a market town that possessed a militia barracks and gaol, and a shoe manufactured centre. Stafford with a population 12,328 in

[114] Kristina Jeffes, *The Irish in Early Victorian Chester: An Outcast Community?* (Liverpool 1996)
[115] Ibid., p. 86
[116] Herson, A small-town perspective, pp. 84-103; Herson, Migration, 'community' or integretation? pp. 156-189; John Herson, Irish immigrant families in the English West Midlands: a long term view, 1830-1914, in J. Belchem J. & K. Tenefelde K. (eds.), *Irish and Polish migration in comparative perspective*, (Essen 2003) pp. 93-108
[117] Herson, A small-town perspective, pp. 84-103

1851, which was precisely one-third of Coventry's total population, contained 504 Irish-born, representing 4.1% of its total population. However, he did not disassemble his figures for areas below town level, nor did he map or account for the distribution of the Irish within Stafford.

Herson noted that there was a high turnover of Irish in the order of 80.0%. He believed that a large number of Famine migrants had already moved on by 1851 but there was substantial level of in-migration for fifteen years after the Famine to keep, at 494 Irish-born for 1861, a constant Irish number in Stafford. He noted from the Famine years until 1871 that one-third of those who left were skilled or otherwise higher-status workers, who were as equally mobile as labourers. He observed that many of Stafford's in-migrants by 1851 had come from the vicinity of Castlerea in Co. Roscommon.

He outlined the factors that did not permit the development of a 'strong Irish 'community' in Stafford'. Irish origin of itself did not guarantee a bonding of migrants from the disparate counties represented in the town, though they might have done so at county level. There were Catholic Celts, Ulster Protestants and a body of more urbanised skilled persons from Dublin and other towns who were unlikely to have common values and interests. He proffered that the most convincing reason for the failure of a 'community' to develop was an insufficientcy of Irish to ensure viability of specific Irish institutions.[118]

In Stafford he suggested the evidence pointed towards integration; it seemed likely to him that the Irish in the town would have been subject to a rapid process of ethnic fade.[119] For this he credited the small Irish numbers, limited residential segregation which ensured day-to-day contact with Staffordians, and the integrative effect of the English small town habitat on the second generation. He believed integrative forces were stronger in the 'small town'. He also saw the degree of intermarriage with locals – it occurred in one-third of Catholic marriages, as a signifier of integration. The view he posits on integration is contrary to the consensus among writers that from the Famine years until the end of the nineteenth century integration was limited in large cities. Writers such as Lowe stated Irish identity was probably shared by children of Irish-born in Britain, at any rate until they became independent; thereby prolonging a sense of Irish communal distinctness.[120] Herson acknowledged that integration was not helped by the high turnover, which meant that many were not there long enough to put down roots. Neither was it helped by the fact most Irish were

[118] Ibid., p. 94
[119] Ibid., p. 96
[120] Lowe, *Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire*, p. 48

poorer and had a lower social status than the local residents although he stated the gap was not wide.

Studies relating to the Midlands

Coventry was juxtaposed in the midlands with Birmingham 17m to the west, Wolverhampton 29m to the northwest and Leicester 23m to the north east. Writings on the Irish in these three cities are important in revealing the changeable midland ambience and latent resentment of the Irish that could, given a catalyst find open expression.[121]

Beyond their northern concentrations, apart from London and Bristol, Birmingham was the only large city where the Irish resided in substantial numbers. In 1841 it already had a significant pre-Famine Irish population of 4,683 that almost doubled to 9,341 a decade later, and which reached 11,332 in 1861. Moran explores the early nineteenth century sympathy of the Birmingham British Political Union for the cause of reform in Ireland, the frequent visits of Daniel O'Connell to the city and the deterioration of the relationship between himself and its radicals.[122] This initial local sympathy and frequency of visits, which included a meeting in 1832 of 15,000-20,000 addressed by O'Connell, increased public consciousness of Irish presence. He portrays an Irish population in the city from the 1830s as a defensive ethnic group with an awareness of its collective self, which others of the time realized was an entity that had to be reckoned with. Much of this Irish confidence and corresponding local reaction against it was due to the rhetoric of Fr Thomas McDonnell and his establishment of a branch of the Catholic Association seeking justice for the Irish. Of particular relevance, however, is the exposition by Moran of a nineteenth century mercurial, sometimes heated relationship between zealous Protestant opinion formers and those of a Catholic outlook, with the Irish inevitably seen as intrinsically associated with the latter. He saw organized anti-Catholic antagonism developing in the city from the 1830s that gave itself a justification for its existence during the restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy in 1850. He recorded the activities of the Protestant Association inviting anti-Catholic speakers to Birmingham, graphically described the riots and the seething anger that flowed from the provocative antics of William Murphy. He wrote on the growth of the Orange Order following these 1867 riots, the reverberations in the city during the Fenian tension, and the local Irish disdain at the attitude of the Catholic Church towards

[121] Herson titled his 2003 essay, based again on Stafford data, as 'Irish Immigrant Families in the English West Midlands'. As that title suggested his work could have been placed for consideration in this study under a 'Midland' heading. However at 38m distance from Coventry it was considered beyond the ambit of the midland influences that affected Coventry and its hinterland.
[122] James Moran, *Irish Birmingham*, (Liverpool 2010) pp. 27-88

Fenian activity. He showed that latent resentment did exist and could be stirred beyond rhetoric by an outside stimulus, with church buildings often, perceived or otherwise, at risk of mob attack.

Chinn stated many who arrived in Birmingham from the 1820s, were leaving the deteriorating conditions in Connacht, or were seasonal agricultural workers who did not return home.[123] By the late 1820s a sizable Irish presence was established that reached 4,683 Irish-born in 1841 and then doubled in the next decade to 9,341 to represent 4.0% of the population. The dramatic increase following the Famine, found the Irish, especially from Connacht, packed in squalid conditions in inner city neighbourhoods, that contained official lodging houses and homes that took in lodgers. He described the appalling conditions and remarked that behind the disreputable image of poor 'Irish' neighbourhoods was a community bonded by powerful ties of kinship and common place of origin. Migrants from Connacht spoke Gaelic. The strength and appeal of Chinn's work is that, similar to Herson, it was exampled by named families and their members, which creates a 'lived experience' relationship with the reader. He noted 'it is apparent that established families played a crucial role in providing a base for new Irish migrants'.[124] He further noted the importance of county, township and kinship networks and stressed how vital they were in the emergence and stability of the Irish community. He observed occupational networks where, e.g. an Irish tailor or a nail maker took in similarly occupied Irish lodgers. He did not confine his research to central areas. In outer Birmingham where 24.0% of the Irish-born were located he found Irish kinship and occupational networking with button workers, glass workers, coach makers and brick workers, each residing in proximity to their fellow trade workers. He stated that the Irish at most formed 2.0% of the middle-class total. He observed that it was not unusual for young children to be employed in industry. For this to be happening among children of migrant Irish, indicated that there was a trend away from labouring into the metal trades. Labourers comprised not a majority but one-third of Irish workers, less than admitted by contemporary reports who honed in on the labouring reputation of the Irish. They worked in a wide variety of manufacturing trades, and in activities such as selling, clothes making, shoemaking, etc. When compared, labourers were less numerous in outer Birmingham than in the central 'most Irish streets'.[125]

---

[123] Chinn, 'Sturdy Catholic emigrants', pp. 52-74
[124] Ibid., p. 64
[125] Mention may also be made of: Kaja Irene Ziesler, *The Irish in Birmingham* 1830-1970, PhD Thesis University of Birmingham 1989; Patsy Davis, *Green Ribbons*.

According to Danaher, Leicester with 877 Irish-born that comprised 1.4% of city population in 1851 was rarely a first choice destination. In noting that Chinn disclosed the majority of Birmingham migrants came from Roscommon, Mayo, Galway, Dublin and Cork, which were similar counties of origin for Leicester, he suggested there might be grounds for seeing migrant mobility in a trans-Midlands framework.[126] The Irish entered an unwelcoming Leicester where prevailed a proud remembrance of how the Leicestershire military had suppressed the 1798 rebellion and where the local media negatively portrayed the Irish. It was a 'powerfully' Protestant city, permeated with anti-Catholic and anti-Irish sentiment.[127] He suggested that this profound Protestant ambience may, through discouraging Irish settlement, partly explain the continuing small in-migration.[128] He outlined the deep historic roots of a strong hostility to Catholicism in Leicester that existed prior to the arrival of the Irish. He referred to an agenda of paranoia to which the Irish as Catholics were added. It was fostered by Protestant societies, and invited visiting activists. This left local Catholicism 'secretive [and] guarded'; it maintained a low profile until mid 1870s when the virulence of the Protestant militancy lessened.[129] The commitment to anti-Catholic action was as active in Leicester as that found in Lancashire and Yorkshire - areas that had large Irish populations prompting him to comment 'the vehemence of Leicester's antipathy is almost startling'.[130]

Danaher was keen to stretch his study of Leicester into the 1890s, outside the 'artificial and narrow' limits that a focus on the 1840s and 1850s would impose, in order to assess the assimilative trend of the migrant population over fifty years. Its central location, chain migration and the job opportunities for those with skills that could be applied in framework knitting, had already attracted a wave of settlement before the arrival of the Famine influx. He found evidence for a sense of ethnic community in the 1830s, and from an Irish second generation crucial source Tom Barclay, that an awareness of Irish cultural identity existed in the 1850s and during the Fenian excitement.[131] Further, there was interest locally, as there was nationally, in the Home Rule and Land League developments. There was also momentum towards integration. After 1870, he saw the Hickman theory of Catholic Church incorporation and denationalisation at work in Leicester - a strengthening of Catholic identity through

[126] Danaher, *Irish in Leicester*, p. 464
[127] Ibid., pp. 287, 288, 361
[128] Ibid., p. 20
[129] Ibid., p. 288
[130] Ibid., p. 323
[131] Tom Barclay, *Memoirs and Medleys*, (Coalville 1995)

control of schools wherein was offered a 'curriculum denying Irish identity'.[132] Meanwhile the Church legitimised and facilitated the growth of peaceful Irish nationalism through church publications and use of school buildings for political meetings in Leicester. It was a settled city in the 1870s with an economy that had assimilative force, as it uplifted Irish men as well as women through their increasing employment, in hosiery and boot and shoe manufacture. He looked at street patterns that showed gradual dispersal away from the traditional Irish central districts around Abbey Street, Green Street and Bedford Street after the mid 1870s, and at marriage patterns that by 1891 showed 90.0% of both men and women had non-Irish partners. He reminded of Barclay's reference to the second and third generations losing their sense of Irishness with many changing their names.[133] Yet, he concluded, while there was some degree of acceptability and integration, the Irish as a social group were not fully assimilated, let alone integrated.[134]

Danaher regarded Leicester as a small city (population 60,584 in 1851) and he sought comparison with Stafford (population 12,328 in 1851) which Herson characterised as a representative of the small town. He observed an Irish Protestant presence in Leicester and the city 'supported a multi-faceted sense of Irish ethnicity and community' that he regarded as absent in Stafford.[135] He saw behaviours in Leicester more reminiscent of those associated with Irish experience in the larger city. Due to the numerical size of Irish migrants in Leicester, Irish clubs and pubs could endure and there were organised local Irish responses to the Fenian and Home Rule questions. Though small, he contended Leicester was 'a microcosm in regard to the generality of issues and experiences of the Irish in Victorian Britain'.[136] Liverpool was a large town and he noted replication of its experience in Leicester. He found a small Catholic bourgeoise, and aspects of nationalism that were replicated, e.g. it received Catholic Church approval due to an opposition to violence, was politically conformist and non radical.[137] The possibility of duplication of large town experience in the small town is a question deserving consideration in relation to Coventry.

Accounts of the Irish are plentiful; some works, like that of O'Day sparkle with perspicacity.[138] Only those studies that have been totemic in migrant historiography and the most proficient in migrant observation or methodological exploration directly

[132] Danaher, *Irish in Leicester*, p. 470
[133] Ibid., p. 468
[134] Ibid., p. 465
[135] Ibid., pp. 361, 464, 469
[136] Ibid., p. 466
[137] Ibid., p. 470
[138] For example: O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour, p. 40.

relevant to this study have been referenced. A review here simply cannot do justice to the wealth of detail painstakingly collected and analysed in these research studies. Finely drawn and highly nuanced, they cannot be reduced to a summary without incurring substantial loss of meaning and over-simplification. In referencing other studies, regard must be had for the methodology employed and the development of historiographical insight. Hickman in her critique of the segregation/assimilation model articulates the caution necessary in intercity comparison when she remarks that 'one instance of relative assimilation in Stafford can always be set against another of relative segregation in London and so on'.[139] The interpretative style of the researcher, together with the historiographical perspective of the period in which a study was undertaken, may be responsible for showing the Irish as experiencing contrasting circumstances in cities located side-by-side. For example Richardson could write in 1976 of Bradford (9,279 Irish-born, 8.9% of city population in 1851) in the period from the 1840s to beyond 1900:

> 'There developed a vicious spiral of deteriorating behaviour within the Irish community and between the Irish and non-Irish of Bradford which added to the feeling of separateness of migrant and host communities. By virtue of their numbers the Irish of Bradford were able to exist as a culturally self-sufficient community… mutual antagonism led to the formation of geographically separated overcrowded, insanitary Irish enclaves.'[140]

Meanwhile in contrast to this hostility, Moriarty could write in 2010 of Huddersfield (1,562 Irish-born, 5.1% of city population in 1851) which was a short distance of 10m from Bradford, that anti-Irish feeling was not an issue; its population welcomed the arrival of the Irish whose contribution to the workforce was valued.[141]

Contained in studies, is the common thread of an unskilled majority, found in overcrowded conditions and clustered in areas of poor housing. Also found in some localities in the second and third quarter of the century is a profound ethnic closeness; a Brummagem-Irish community 'bonded by powerful ties of kinship and common place of origin', or a Wolfrunian-Irish 'communal assertiveness and ethnic solidarity'. However there is also as Davis has observed a 'variety of experience… rooted in the specific conditions that obtained in the different communities in which they settled'.[142] Relating to studies, their most fundamental collaboration, beyond reappraising the 'Little Irelands' caricature, is in the finding summarised by Davis who stated: 'The condition, religion and expectation of Irish emigrants were as varied as their patterns of

[139] Hickman, Alternative historiographies, p. 237
[140] Richardson, Irish in Bradford, p. 316
[141] Moriarty, Irish in Huddersfield, pp. 10, 25, 119
[142] Davis, Little Irelands, pp. 128-129

migration and settlement'.[143] It is this variety of experience according to Swift and Gilley that 'complicates facile generalisations about the place of the Irish in Britain'.[144] The degree of cross-referencing in these fresh studies shows that a solid framework of understanding is now in place. Such comparative referencing provides context and direction beneficial to this local study of Coventry.

1.2 Size of Irish population

Coventry

The Irish-born in the Census Abstracts and for the Study Area as set out in Table 1.2. The Study Area was established to provide a constant sized area that would allow intercensal comparison. It coincides with the Registration District for Coventry which was larger in size than the 'City' area quoted in later Abstracts and was sufficiently expansive to contain the built-up area of the city over the relevant range of censuses (Maps 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3). The technical details of coverage are outlined in Appendix 17 which also considers a serious discrepancy in Census Abstract of the Irish-born figures for 1851 and a relative deficiency of coverage area in those offered by the Abstract for the total population in 1871. What may be mentioned here is that Table 1.2 shows the total Irish-born as recorded in the city by the Abstracts included a substantial number of Irish-born recorded within the walls of the Barracks. They were only resident in Coventry at the behest of military command and subject to rotation. Without modulation, such a large institutional inclusion, of mainly young unmarried males, in a low city total would distort the ability of Irish-born figures to convey a sense of Irish-born 'community' size or structure. The 1841 Irish-born city total was swollen by over a fifth through its 118 Irish-born barrack occupants; totals for subsequent decades were also inflated though not to the same degree as 1841. These transient barrack residents are not included in direct investigation in this study which focuses on a consideration of the Irish in terms of local commitment and community.[145]

Other locations

Pooley examined seventy towns and provided ranked results of the absolute and percentage Irish-born for the 'top twenty' in 1851 (See Table 1.1). As noted in Appendix 17 the Abstract figure for 1851 Coventry Irish-born is particularly suspect, nevertheless in the interest of Census Abstract uniformity the 1.89% figure will be

---

[143] Ibid., p. 106

[144] Gilley & Swift (eds.), Irish in Britain 1815-1939, p. 5

[145] A very small number of officers or soldiers' wives with young children lived outside the Barracks. Rather than arbitrarily picking out from the population at large, those who appeared involved with the Barracks, it was decided that for study purposes the Barracks residents were deemed to be those that were confined by its walls or in Barracks enumeration books.

maintained during the consideration of the Irish-born in Coventry relative to Irish in other locations. Many references to the Irish in writings rarely travel beyond the headline totals. The impact of the Irish-born in different cities is often simply gauged by the size of the totals involved which may provide a suitable impression when e.g. in 1851 Birmingham with 9,341 Irish-born is compared with its neighbour Coventry's diminutive 698.[146] However crucial in the making of any inter-city comparison is an understanding of the character of a particular setting, and the character and mobility of the Irish drawn to a city. If any resemblance is claimed between Coventry and e.g. York (with a similar total population to Coventry, of which Irish-born comprised 5.3 %), then the location and role of York as an historical, provincial and ecclesiastical centre, its relationship with the industrialised West Yorkshire woollen towns, the nature of employment offered in what was a pre-industrial town, the concern of the town's philanthropic Quakers Samuel Tuke and James Hack Tuke and the 'marked degree of anti-Irish prejudice' identified by Finnegan must be acknowledged.[147] Further, municipal results that show proportionality of Irish-born and total population, while useful in portraying distribution on a national scale, will not reveal the higher and more concerning proportions found within individual municipalities in their enumeration areas that contained Irish.

The towns proffered by Pooley each contained 6.0% or more Irish-born in 1851 with Liverpool at 22.3% top of the list. Other large concentrations were found in e.g. Dundee 18.9%, Glasgow 18.2% and Manchester 13.1%, but in that list smaller towns such as Carlisle at 8.0%, Chester at 7.3% and Wolverhampton at 6.8% also feature. Below 6.0% and at a level greater than 2.0% of Irish-born in their total population, existed large towns such as at Leeds 4.9%, Birmingham at 4.0%, Bristol at 3.5% or Nottingham at 2.7%. Although based on smaller total populations than Coventry, county towns such Shrewsbury with 2.8% and Gloucester with 2.6% Irish-born showed a higher percentage than Coventry's 1.9%. Beneath this percentage for Coventry, stood Northampton at 1.7% Irish-born and nearby Leicester at 1.4%; their total populations were respectively smaller and larger. Thus it can be seen that Coventry at mid-century

[146] Reservation on comparability exists where in relation to built up area, it is possible that administrative area may underbound in one city and may overbound in another. Earlsdon was being rapidly developed in the 1880s outside the administrative ambit of Coventry for which figures are shown in published tables. Distortion where community size is a factor under consideration may be caused by the presence in, e.g. Birmingham and Northampton, of military barracks which could have a significant number of transient Irish-born present up to the 1860s.

[147] Finnegan, Irish in York, pp. 167-184. With York, Carter identifies Norwich, Bristol, Exeter and Newcastle as eighteenth century provincial capitals. (H. Carter, Towns and urban systems 1730-1914, in R.A. Dodgshon & R.A. Butlin (eds.), *An Historical Geography of England and Wales*, (London 1990) p. 405).

had, in relative terms, within its population a small proportion of Irish-born. The large numbers in the above mentioned city percentages that could create their own concerning dynamic were absent from Coventry.

1.3 Sources

The census as a source

The interval between censuses is too long to catch the frequency of movement of migrants who were transient and mobile. Herson made an apt observation that the snapshot character of the census can exude an apparent stability which could mask a transient undercurrent.[148] The magnitude of the Famine influx particular to the later 1840s is only displayed in 1851 as a decennial change from 1841. Collins refers to the static nature of the census and reminds that as the years progress families fall out of the census through death or its members moving out.[149] The first census to identify Irish migrants was that of 1841, and the availability of its data - if rather coarse - allows for an assessment of the numerical condition of the community, in both the pre- and post-Famine years of arrival.[150] While the post-Famine arrivals attracted notice, the 1841 census witnesses the fact that these post-Famine entrants were a rapid accretion on patterns established by the 437 Irish-born resident in the city from before the Famine.[151] It would be an over-layering process that would again be recognised as applying to the Irish-born in Coventry at the end of the century. Questions on the structure of the censuses, on the information they sought and related, and their reliability have been addressed by Higgs.[152] Some further considerations that affect harvesting the data are outlined in Appendix 17.

The household head is placed first in the enumeration and the relationship of all that follow to the head is then recorded. This recording arrangement becomes, in the general mind, one where the most important person in the household is the head and those that follow are the head's family, after which are ranked those of lessening importance such as kin, servants and lodgers.

To see the latter as mere add-ons to the main family is to underestimate the initial and day-to-day support offered through kinship, the sustenance of the community

---

[148] Herson, A small-town perspective, p. 85

[149] Brenda Collins, Irish Emigration to Dundee and Paisley during the First Half of the Nineteenth Century, in J.M. Goldstrom and L.A. Clarkson (eds.), *Irish Population, Economy and Society: essays in honour of the late K.H. Connell*, (Oxford 1981) p. 200

[150] There is an absence of enquiry into the relation of members of the household to its head in 1841.

[151] Excluding the 118 Irish-born in the barracks in 1841

[152] Edward Higgs, *Making Sense of the Census Revisited*, (London 2005); See also: Susan Lumas *Making use of the Census*, (London 1997); Eve McLaughlin, *The Censuses 1841-1891, Use and interpretation*, (Aylesbury 1998); Peter Christian & David Annal, *Census, The Expert Guide*, (Kew 2008); Stuart A. Raymond, *The Census 1801-1911, A Guide for the Internet era*, (Bury 2009)

through the making available of lodgings which also assisted in creating common bonds, and the financial help derived from lodging income especially to the older widowed. Some of these lodgers were the same age as the census head, and compatriots of the head when rows occurred with neighbours; in real life they may not have visualised the census head as anything such. Some lodgers may have been described as kin; further the same persons might be labelled kin in one census and lodgers in another.[153] Comments made by the Inspector of Nuisances, on overcrowding recorded in Appendix 4 told that the Irish were not adverse to labelling lodgers as cousins and relations in the belief they could then take-in as many they wished.[154] In some cases, particularly in 1851, viewing a large unit of Gahagans, or of Conroys, or of differently names co-residing related families as a 'clan' seemed a more realistic approach to the internal household relationship than seeing the unit in terms of a neat census page arrangement of a family listing that was then followed by the rest.

There was a varied collection of cousins, aunts, nieces, nephews, sisters, mothers, mothers-in-law and grandchildren. Kin, under which these were classified, may not do justice as a term, to capture the deep bonds many had with the household family. Some in a household were unattached adult 'children', but in census appearance terms, they seemed never to have left their parents side. Others might be co-residing married 'children', accompanied by sons- and daughters-in-law and their offspring. Found at the end of household listings were widowed parents who at an earlier time had their own family relationships under a different head. Time's passage meant that the widowed parent's original family structure had collapsed but what remained of it, because of deep kinship ties, was very intertwined with the present household. The interweave fails to draw central attention to itself, in a statistical landscape pinioned by nuclear families. The role of these widowed mothers in linking the outlook of one generation to the next may also be underestimated.

An impression can take hold simply from the listing arrangement on enumeration pages that the head family possessed residential stability and had less mobility than is assumed to be the case for lodgers. While the rearing of young children in head families would tend to lessen mobility, as would the single unencumbered state of many lodgers permit it, both were not in two exclusively different residential mindsets. The practice of living in lodgings was not only engaged in by those, usually single, who preferred the convenience and flexibility of renting but could be slipped into by persons who

[153] If a choice had to be made between kin or lodging status, then if the person in question had the same surname as the household head 'kin' was preferred.
[154] *Coventry Standard* 25th April 1851

appeared members of a solid family a decade or two earlier, but who e.g. subsequently lost a partner. Some lodgers were in essence families sharing accommodation but were termed as such by the census necessity to declare a household head; the order of their recording under the head transformed them into lodging subjugates of the head. Lodging was part of the mix of modes of habitation. For many around 1851 it was a pre-step to forming marital relationships, the creation of separate households and bearing of children with city roots. Lodging played a useful role in sustaining Irish presence; to the offering party it supplied financial help, especially to the widowed, and to the seekers it provided an initial toe-hold in the city. Those boarders who had a more transient intercity disposition and those boarders who were settled in the city all came under the term lodger. The former were the casual lodgers with light commitment to the city and must have included an assortment of persons seeking casual work, harvesters, jobbers, beggars and trampers.[155] Casual lodging was voluminous, e.g. the city Inspector of Nuisances reported that during the last fortnight in April 1859 the number of casual lodgers that passed through was 601 males and 241 females.[156] The second type were the lodgers who were more domiciled locally and might crystallise into a household head or spouse with the commitment to the city the word household suggests.[157] Since the census designation of lodger does not convey intention on the length of city sojourn, the settled element of the lodging force cannot be quantified for inclusion when figures estimating the size of the settled community are compiled.[158]

'Ireland' was simply proffered by many Irish-born as the reply to the question on birthplace. As a result investigation centred on the role of birthplace at Irish provincial

---

[155] That some of these lodgers were temporarily settled seasonal harvesters on a wider tour of England is also possible as it was remarked in 1848 'Considerable numbers of these have annually come to England in the spring, to work at hay-harvest, remain for corn-harvest and hop-picking and then have carried home their earnings in the autumn'. The annual Irish increase caused by the arrival of seasonal harvesters and wandering poor was observed occurring in Coventry in April.' The 1841 census was held on 6th June and would have captured sojourning seasonal harvesters; however, defeating the discovery of such information is the fact that lodging status was not displayed for 1841. Ironically the censuses which allowed lodging to be recorded were taken on: 30th March for 1851, 7th April 1861 and 2nd April 1871, and were too early in the year to capture the harvesters. A consequence of end of March or the beginning of April censuses is that the numbers enumerated may not fully indicate the extra impact in the town of Irish harvesters who might be present when their work season was in progress.

[156] *Coventry Standard* 29th April 1859. The figures must have been gleaned from registered lodging houses. The amount of such traffic through smaller unregistered accommodations is unknown.

[157] Or a settled person previously head of a household but who had lost that status for a census e.g. Dublin-born Edward Broughill, 63 years, married, was boarding in 1871 with Dublin-born John Barry and family in 1871. RG10/3177.14.21 ED 23. His wife Sarah had moved to Leicester where she was staying with their daughter Eliza. RG10/3284.32.6 ED 14. Just two decades earlier in 1851, Edward with his wife and 5 children appeared a very solid household. HO107/2067.120.28 ED 6.

[158] It is to be mentioned that there were those in lodgings e.g. curates, who were in essence short stayers, but where the term 'casual lodger' and the disconnect with the city it implied, was not appropriate to their situation.

or county level in influencing settlement in Coventry has to rely on approximately 36.0%-50.0% who offered more detail such as an Irish town or county.

The birthplace column in census enumerations is the sole gateway through which migrant data is accessed for analysis; it foists birthplace in Ireland as the primary determinant of paradigms of Irish experience. Those singled out on birthplace, during any census inspection, become corralled as the study domain. This applies whether a child spent merely a week after birth in Ireland, or a much travelled person long left Ireland. It lends to the supposition that birthplace cultural formation continues to influence outlook in after years. However birthplace as Pooley noted may be a 'very imprecise indication of ethnic affiliation'.[159]

As mentioned some studies have relied on Irish-born data but have implied that the dimensions of the community would be larger if those born locally with an Irish association were included.[160]. Specifically selecting Irish-born as a basis for analysis may be adequate for a mid-nineteenth century study when Irish-born were in volume and substantially gave the community its body and direction.[161] In a long ranging study such as this, reliance on quanta of Irish-born to represent the breadth of a community and its changing characteristics, would not provide for a fulfilling ananlysis. For example socio-economic change may need time to occur, and within an Irish-born generation may be unremarkable. It may become apparent over the lives of their children and grandchildren but these were mostly local and not Irish-born.

The household arrangement of census data facilitates the collection not only of Irish-born but more of those who, as evidenced by their relationship to the head, deserved inclusion in an 'Irish' grouping. These would consist of British-born spouses married to Irish-born and the British-born children of Irish-born (or their offspring) who still resided with their parents. All thus listed make up the group under consideration in this study and are referred to as 'Irishcom'. The detailed characteristics of Irishcom are shown in Chapters 5 and 6 as aggregates, or shown under the household arrangement of *'Irish household'* or *'English household containing Irish*. The bland attribution of Irish identity to grown-up children and their offspring has shortcomings. These children

[159] Pooley, Segregation or integration? p. 73

[160] Frances Finnegan's study of York where community figures were used was an early exception to the tradition of relying on Irish-born data.

[161] Even in these studies that dwell on a specific sentence, the representativeness of Irish-born data may be raised. Chinn in his study based on Irish-born numbers for Birmingham in 1851 observed, but beyond this mention did not address the issue: 'In these streets as elsewhere, the Irish community could be expanded largely if the English-born children of migrants were included. For example, in Water Street this exercise would advance the Irish from a quarter of the residents to over a third, while in London Prentice Street it would augment them from almost a half to near two-thirds.' (Chinn, 'Sturdy Catholic emigrants', p. 59).

could cross the national identity barrier between the Irish and English with more ease, and may have been distinctly hybrid in outlook

In assembling databases where information is collected by visiting successive census manuscript pages, British-born children of migrants cannot be practically captured once they mature and leave their Irish-born parent's residence, since they blend into the English-born populace. When such a British-born male of Irish extraction leaves and becomes 'lost' there is still a chance, especially if the surname is distinctive, that they can be located through electronic searches. However a British born-female on moving out of an Irish household to marry is almost always 'lost' due to her surname change, unless later in time the aged Irish-born parent returns to live with her now married daughter and son-in-law and in the process highlights the daughter's 'Irish' background. Enquiries into the 'lost' may be undertaken on an individual time-consuming basis; but is an implausible endeavour on a wider scale. This immutable depletion of the referenced children which will hamper attaining the actual total of the Irish community was recognised as early as 1979 by Lees.[162]

A number of Tables in this study contain a family history underlay and they illustrate the difficulty of truly circumscribing an 'Irish' grouping. They show families of Irish-born with their Coventry-born children, who on becoming young adults peel off (in the census) into British society. In longitudinal analysis, depending on the point of perspective, the members i.e. Coventry-born children of Irish parents, of what firmly appears as an 'Irish' household in one census can appear less 'Irish' – if detectable at all without deliberate detailed analysis - in the households they create in a later census.

There is a risk to be recognised that when the Irish are plucked out of the manuscript pages and aggregated, that a collective identity or cohesiveness may erroneously appear to exist. The determination of the existence and nature of any community is not assisted by censual enquiry concentrated on a narrow range of demographic attributes that do little to tell of the agenda, spirit and coherence of a community or the different Irish identities that might comprise it.

The migrant record

The migrants themselves left little sense of how they experienced their adjustment to British cities and this applies also to Coventry. While primary education had been introduced through the Irish national schools system in the 1830s, with attendance non-compulsory, migrants who had not availed of this free formal education may have been unfamiliar with the skills of reading and writing, and dare it said, ignorant and utilitarian

[162] Lees, *Exiles of Erin*, p. 48

in mind-set.[163] Davis informs that in 1851, 45.0% of the population in Ireland were illiterate, though this may have been lower in the 15-40 age-group from which migrants most likely derived.[164]

This failing was then not confined to the Irish. In Coventry, marriage registers into the mid-century, showed the celebrant's well scribed entry was followed so often, with nothing other than a mark from those and their sponsors invited to sign the resister. The actual forms completed in writing by household heads for the 1911 census are presently available for inspection and they show the contribution national schooling made in the meantime to the advancement of literacy. The impoverished overcrowded circumstances of many migrants, the demand to find work, and work itself that was drudging and took up many hours of the day, left little opportunity for reflection, diary writing or correspondence. They may have believed that a record of their mundane experience and generally disapproved of lifestyle had little appeal to a wider and largely unsympathetic audience, or had any place in posterity. Perhaps oral means, facilitated by many public houses was regarded as the convenient method of transmitting impressions. They may have desired to keep a low profile and to leave a light footprint, and thus were circumspect about committing anything to paper, which Griffin reminds was a precious commodity in the 1830s.[165] It may have been a practice inculcated into the Irish who were a colonised people to be wary of establishment enquiries, and that a person maintained advantage in life by keeping one's thoughts to oneself. This 'paucity of personal testimony' is bemoaned by O'Leary.[166] However it is to be noted that ego-documents were rarely written by the majority population either.[167] Only one personal account of life in Coventry, that of Joseph Gutteridge (1816-1899), is available for the nineteenth century.[168] Not all Irish were illiterate, or lacking in confidence to express an opinion in writing, as Thomas McLean showed in his two letters to the *Herald* (Appendix 2). The second letter provides rare Irish migrant articulation, as well as first hand insight into the poor circumstances that forced children into forfeiting their schooling and their limited future prospects. The body of the letter shows such participation in the English milieu that it would not be suspected, apart from his giveaway reference to the Dublin songwriter Thomas Moore that he was born in Dublin. The lack of observation by the Irish on their experience of intermixing with the native

[163] John Coolahan, The Daring First Decade of the Board of National Education, 1831-184, *The Irish Journal of Education*, Vol 17. No 1 (1983) p. 51
[164] Davis, *Irish in Britain 1815-1914*, p. 41
[165] Emma Griffin, *Liberty's Dawn: A People's History of the Industrial Revolution*, (Yale 2013) p. 1
[166] O'Leary, *Irish in Wales*, p. 10
[167] Griffin, *Liberty's Dawn*, p. 16
[168] Valerie E. Chancellor (ed.), *Master and Artisan in Victorian England*, (London 1969)

population sadly means that it is only through police recalling their challenging encounters with certain migrants that intimation is provided of the Irish mindset which in such circumstances will only relate to the censurable occasion.

Reflections, including those by Ullathorne, Gutteridge and Lynch (referred to below) which were penned later in life, may not be beyond fault, with Griffin having advised that reflections may incorporate 'failures of memory, inherent subjectivity and retrospective imposition of meaning and order'.[169] Barclay's account relates to Leicester which may have had a singular dedicated hostility, but his words still serve as a reality check, that such attitudes might exist in Coventry while the absence of personal comment by the Irish in Coventry may lend an otherwise impression of a benign, respectful atmosphere.

A collection of family behaviour records with more intimate detail, than provided by the census, providing tracking of a family name across the century, may offer an impression of what thoughts crossed the migrant mind. However aside from the prodigious task of assembling such material it could never be as informative as written migrant self-reflection.[170] Censuses only provide a basic 'statement of position' that of necessity has to be interpreted to establish the reasons why the migrants of such an age and gender were in a particular occupation and residential area. The reasons for their choice may be due to a set of human factors beyond the conclusions inferable from the census that it was a requirement to find work and affordable accommodation. Also migrants cannot be assumed to have continually acted in their own best interest; the anxious, infirm, or alcohol addicted may not have had the capacity to identify, or take a course of action e.g. moving elsewhere, that was to their ultimate advantage. It remains unknown for Coventry if the 'Celtic Catholic' element perceptively saw their situation as one where they were trapped in poverty and subject to host dislike, Perhaps some Irish determined they would not be overawed by host cultural dominance and encapsulated their response in the knowing expression 'they think they are above us'.

Contemporary records

Contemporary 'official' reports on the Irish have to be appraised for subliminal bias or a desire to satisfy the sensation-seeking tastes of the middle classes.[171] O'Leary says the majority of sources relating to the Irish were 'at best grudgingly accepting of

---

[169] Griffin, *Liberty's Dawn*, p. 9

[170] A person by person investigation is daunting. Thus apart from Herson's investigation along these lines in Stafford, comprehensive use of a bottom-up approach by urban historians has little appeal. (Herson, *Divergent paths*).

[171] Tim Dolin, *George Eliot*, (Oxford 2005) p. 64

their presence, at worst openly hostile to them'[172]. Written by middle class authority figures such as doctors, policemen, or workhouse directors tasked to officially report on the extent of crime or environmental problems, and influenced by the attitudes of the time, the Irish were adjudged to have been the cause rather than the result (to which they were seen as indifferent) of the troubling conditions described. Best regarded the Poor Law reports as 'myopic and narrow-minded'.[173] These observers' comments, more copiously available for some cities than others, dwelt on extreme examples, and although some distinguished particular behaviour as emanating from only the 'low' Irish, the residing impression was that the examples applied widely to the Irish. Such accounts became part of the standard 'inundation from catastrophe' narrative for long uncritically promoted in history texts. The report in which James Phillips Kay described 'Little Ireland' and 'Irish Town' in Manchester is an oft quoted example.[174] Interest in municipal improvement, the silk trade, the Irish poor, and vagrancy prompted probing reports in the early part of the nineteenth century.[175] While of enormous value, these reports highlighted the issues the Irish faced when their numbers, poverty and reception made their adjustment difficulties prominent. However in contrast to mid-century there were few enquiries that could to the advantage of the researcher elucidate on the later century 'settled' Irish situation and rebalance the dominating images of crisis and transience in earlier reports.

William Bernard Ullathorne, Bishop of Birmingham from 1850, was parish priest of Coventry from 1841 to 1846, at a time particularly pertinent to the movement of Irish migrants. He was the only English bishop to write an autobiography and has had two biographies written of him.[176] However information from this source while providing some insight on Catholic confidence in Coventry is centred on the construction and dedication of St. Osburg's. It fails to shed light for this enquiry on crucial aspects of his ministry and outlook e.g. on migrant welfare, or the scale of poverty and its alleviation, or degree of community self-help, or the appropriateness and scale of mixed marriages, or the extent of local approval of the Irish, or local Protestant hostility, if any, towards

---

[172] O'Leary, *Irish in Wales*, p. 11
[173] Geoffrey Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain 1851-75*, (London 1971) p. 142
[174] The Moral and Physical Condition of the Working Classes of Manchester in 1832 http://www.historyhome.co.uk/peel/p-health/mterkay.htm Accessed 6th March 2018
[175] Report from Select Committee on the Silk Trade: with the minutes of evidence PP 1831-32 XIX.1 [678]; Report on the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain;
Commission on the Hand-Loom Weavers, Assistant Commissioners Reports, Midland District; Reports and Communications on Vagrancy, PP 1847-48 LIII.235 [987]
[176] William Bernard Ullathorne, *From cabin-boy to archbishop, the autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne; printed from the original draft; with an introduction by Shane Leslie*, (New York 1941); Cuthbert Butler, *The Life and Times of Bishop Ullathorne, 1806-1889*, (London 1926); Champ, *William Bernard Ullathorne*

Catholicism. This sad omission has prevalence in biographies of religious worthies on which Gilley remarked 'this species of two volume *Life and Letters* for the most part ignores social questions for ecclesiastical and theological controversy'.[177] There also may have been, as discussed later, a strange reluctance to acknowledge the contribution of the Irish migrant to the sustenance of the English Catholic Church. No other nineteenth century Coventry priest, described Catholic and associated Irish circumstances, or had their ministering experience written about in depth. Coventry possessed what Gilley bemoaned generally as the 'secular priesthood and laity, noblemen and commoners, English and Irish, who were socially important if individually unremarkable and intellectually uninteresting, [that] have for the most part gone unwept, unhonoured and unsung'.[178] Ullathorne was greatly assisted in Coventry by Margaret Hallahan who arrived in 1842 and departed in 1846 when he left the city.[179] She would have encountered the Irish in her role as sacristan, teacher of their children and a visitor to their homes. In her biography the finding of any informative comment on the migrants would have been of value, even allowing that her biography, recalling her extraordinary religious zeal was hagiographic, having been written by reverential nuns of the order she founded, shortly after she died in 1869. There is but one reference to her caring for the children of a poor Irish woman who had died of fever.[180] William Murphy, the provocative anti-Catholic lecturer who made an appearance in neighbouring Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Walsall in 1867 did not visit. Had he done so, such a visit might have informed on the temperature of relationships between Catholics and Non-Catholics in Coventry. His absence, like that of another anti-Catholic lecturer Baron de Camin before him in the 1850s, suggests Coventry was a tolerant city and there was not the potential for provocation. The anti-Catholic Alessandro Gavazzi visited Coventry in May 1854. That he received loud applause in St. Mary's Hall tells that there was in the city at least an amount of anti-Catholic upholders, of the size that comprised his audience. However this has to be measured against the fact that he did not give, as was his norm, a second more graphic lecture, and that his views received a cold reception in the *Herald* and surprisingly so in the *Coventry Standard* (Appendix 5).[181]

---

[177] Sheridan Gilley, Papists, Protestants and the Irish in London, 1835-70, in G.J Cuming & Derek Baker (eds.) *Popular Belief and Practice, Papers read at the Ninth Summer Meeting and the Tenth Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society, Studies in Church History Vol 8*, (Cambridge 1972) p. 265

[178] Ibid., p. 265

[179] Her Religious Children, *Life of Mother Margaret Mary Hallahan*, (New York 1869) pp. 49-133

[180] Ibid., pp. 122-3

[181] See also Appendix 5 for comments made at a Coventry City Mission meeting in 1857 in St. Mary's Hall by Rev J. Drury and reaction to them.

Hugh Heinrick in his roving survey of the Irish in Britain in 1872 tellingly passed from Leicester to Birmingham without reference to Coventry.[182] John Denvir in 1892 recorded the city on his journey around Britain and assumed Irish and Catholic as congruent in Coventry in his predictably complimentary but depthless narrative. He provided little elucidation on the condition of the mid-century Irish.[183] Prest who furnished in 1960 a singularly educative and insightful history of industrial Coventry and its impact on the social and residential conditions in the first half of the nineteenth century does not allude to the Irish.[184] Neither did Benjamin Poole (1800-1880), who spent a lifetime in Coventry; knew intimately about the conditions of weavers and the working of silk trade, and who wrote in 1852 *The History of Coventry.*[185] Nor did Joseph Gutteridge (1816-1899) who lived his life in Coventry and who in 1893 wrote cogently in his autobiography about daily life and the distress of weavers in his earlier years.[186]

Charles Bray (1811-1884) was a prosperous ribbon manufacturer and rationalist who resided at 'Rosehill' on the Radford Road in Coventry. His home was the venue for the 'Rosehill Circle' where George Eliot and radicals such as Robert Owen and Ralph Waldo Emerson found like-minded freethinkers, liberals and sceptics. Bray was a noted social reformer who is credited with writing the unattributed preface and introductory essay to a book by his sister-in-law Mary Hennell.[187] In his lengthy essay, in similar vein to Carlyle on the condition of England, he was conscious of the Irish, where in a mention of Glasgow he was told of 'the great influx of the Irish poor' and on Birmingham he remarked 'we have seen that 374 lodging-houses are devoted to the reception of a loose population of Irish and mendicants'.[188] That he was so cognisant of

---

[182] Alan O'Day, *A Survey of the Irish in England 1872*, (London 1990)
[183] John Denvir, *The Irish in Britain*, (London 1892) pp. 427-428
[184] John Prest, *The Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, (London 1960)
[185] Benjamin Poole, *The History of Coventry*, (Coventry 1852); Report on the Silk Trade, pp. 52-68
[186] Chancellor, *Master and Artisan*
[187] Hennell was not named either as author but all scholars attribute the writing to her.
[188] [Mary Hennell], *An Outline of the various Social Systems & Communities which have founded on the principle of Co-operation with an introductory essay, by the author of 'The Philosophy of Necessity'.* (London 1844) pp. xvi, xxiii, lxxxvi, xc; He wrote on p. xvi: 'In all our large cities and populous manufacturing districts a very large proportion of the population are living without any certain means of subsistence, or upon wages utterly inadequate to maintain a decent existence, while among those whose earnings are sufficient to support them in respectability, thousands are reduced by intemperance, improvidence, and the vices resulting from ignorance and the absence of moral principal, to the standard of the starving beggar and prostitute. This squalid mass of misery, fostered by neglect, multiplying by its own inherent tendency, and swollen by the continual influx of Irish immigrants, rural labourers in search of employment, and manufacturing operatives by strikes, improvements in machinery, and vicissitudes in trade, advances continually; and, although ravaged by the typhus fever, or decimated by a frightful mortality, encroaches more and more on the boundaries of civilization…..'. His essay reminds that the circumstances ascribed to the Irish by commentators were common to a large section of society. While it

poverty and aware of Irish 'influx' and an Irish 'loose population' in nearby Birmingham but did not make any reference to the Irish in Coventry even as an example of those in poor circumstances in Coventry, lends to the belief that the Irish existence in early 1840s Coventry did not engender or represent especial problems for them to be singled-out.

This dearth of Coventrian reference, directly commenting on the local Irish is to be lamented and contrary to the case in nearby locations. There is no equivalent for Coventry to the city report on Birmingham contained in the 'State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain' which has proved such a boon for scholars of that city.[189] Neither is there for Coventry a detailed local primary source equivalent to the Journal of Thomas Augustine Finigan who sympathetically, if often critically, outlined the circumstances of the ordinary Irish in Birmingham in 1837-38, which was accessed by Davis.[190] Likewise, in Leicester the Annual Reports of the Leicester Domestic Mission Society by the Unitarian Rev. Joseph Dare, even if negatively covering the Irish from 1846 to approximately 1863, was fortunately available to Danaher who used the source extensively.[191] There is one controversial account of life in the Coventry Mercy Convent circa 1869 and some description of the town in Irish-born Hannah Lynch's (1862-1904) *Autobiography of a Child* published in 1889 (Appendix 11).[192]

Potential sources fail to deliver on their promise. Accounts of Ullathorne's adventurous early life, his parochial endeavours, episcopalian management and Fenian challenges are engaging matters for the historian but strip these away and what remains is the paucity of his comments on the Coventry Irish which provide but a meagre resource. This thinness of description can lead to a struggle to flesh out detail in order to make a seamless and compelling narrative. It risks an undesired supplementation by national findings, and dependence and over-scaling of the significance of reports in the weekly newspapers columns on those Irish before the magistrates. Fragmentary is a

---

is to be said that his essay was not centred on Coventry, however in writing it, as a ribbon manufacturer in the city, he drew from his experience of conditions immediately around him.

[189] Such as Alexander Peach, Poverty, Religion and Prejudice in Nineteenth Century Britain: The Catholic Irish in Birmingham 1800-c1880, Unpublished PhD Thesis, De Montfort University (2000) https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/2749353.pdf Accessed 1st March 2019. Leicester also received brief mention in the report on p. 164.

[190] Thomas Augustine Finigan, *Journal of Thomas Augustine Finigan, 1837/8*, Birmingham Central Library Archives; Davis, *Green Ribbons*

[191] Joseph Dare, (ed.), *Annual Reports of Leicester Domestic Mission Society*, *(1846-63)*; Danaher, *Irish in Leicester*

[192] Hannah Lynch, *Autobiography of a Child*, (New York 1899) http://hdl.handle.net/2027/iau.31858006144392 Accessed 2nd January 2018; Faith Binckes & Kathryn Laing, Irish Autobiographical Fiction and Hannah Lynch's Autobiography of a Child *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, Vol 55, No 2, 2012 pp. 195-218

word used by O'Leary to describe the availability of such evidence and Fitzpatrick cautions on haste to generalize from fragmentary evidence.[193]

Printed Matter

The local newspapers of greatest source during the century were the *Herald* (1824-1939) and its rival the *Standard* (1836-1945). The *Coventry Times* (1855-1899) was the first penny paper with material more visually accessible as it was arranged under clear headings.[194] The *Coventry Telegraph* (1891-1979) was a valuable source at century end. In the first instance they portrayed, and may have had a hand in creating, the character, localism and concerns of the city. Thus they described the setting in which the Irish took-up residence. As commercial enterprises, according to Hobbs, local newspapers 'thrived as catalysts and chronicles' of the urban centres where published.[195] In their shaping of and showing of public opinion they provided an indication of influences and attitudes that bore down on Irish migrants. Reports and views would more likely have found their way into a newspaper if they contained an extreme or sensational angle. Editorials, letters and articles were all written to promote an agenda with the cold message often concealed by prolixity or satire. Narratives therein may not describe reality, as rallying, or anger inducing comments made at election hustings, or expressions at celebratory dinners of convivial satisfaction and goodwill, may have been rhetoric or polished lip service regarded as appropriate to the occasion. In order that the editorial slant of the contributing newspaper can be factored in on reading, titles are often shown in this narrative rather than amassed as foot-notes, even at the risk of bothersome repetition.[196] Again while newspapers possess the advantage in their ability to show up the attitudes of the time, they contain the equal disadvantage till the 1870s at least, of a degree of 'othering' and condescending

---

[193] O'Leary, *Irish in Wales*, p. 11
David Fitzpatrick, Review: The Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire by W. J. Lowe, *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 109, No. 430 (Feb. 1994) p. 222

[194] For 1867 the *Coventry Times* could supply think pieces copied from other publications on e.g. the nature of Irish patriotism (6th February 67), the turbulent state of Ireland (20th March 67), the lengthiest graphic account of the final hours and execution of the Manchester Martyrs (27th November). An extensive piece on what motivated Fenians explained how they saw their actions as a struggle for nationality (4th December). An upcoming lecture in Coventry on the position of the Irish Church to be given by the Rev Charles Vance, who was a popular Birmingham lecturer, prompted the paper on 18th January 1868, with the recent Clerkenwell explosions in mind, to observe in part 'Nothing, in our judgement will be so well calculated to secure peace to Ireland, and suppress the spirit of violence which is abroad amongst us just now, as the exhibition to our Irish fellow subjects of a spirit of earnest and intelligent determination to redress the grievances under which their country groans. If years and years ago we had done justly by Ireland, that hideous upgrowth, Fenianism with its horrid outrages and power for mischief, would have found no place in the land…'

[195] Andrew Hobbs, *A Fleet Street in Every Town: The Provincial Press in England, 1855-1900*, (Cambridge 2018) p. 4

[196] Appendix 8 provides an example of editorial partisanship.

antipathy towards the Irish. Reliance on such accounts creates the potential for their subjective observations in a nineteenth century zeitgeist to influence historiographical writing; an influence which MacRaild remarked has been apparent in historical studies.[197] For the Liberal supporting *Herald* the injustice found in Ireland was a cause to champion. The avowedly Tory *Standard* spoke on the side of Queen and Church and was trenchantly against both the Catholic Church and Daniel O'Connell. Either paper was prepared to use the handling of an Irish issue by a government (or its lauding by supporters) with which the paper did not agree, as a self-serving opportunity to criticise the government or the supporters, and to regard the handling as an example of the government's ineptness. Much of the general material, beyond editorial and local reporting, that thundered about the Irish or the Catholic Church could crop up in either paper since their columns comprised 'scissors and paste' extracts, long and short, without much harmonisation in style that had been published in other newspapers throughout Britain and Ireland. The presence of anti-Catholic or Irish tirades in the newspapers was explained to readers as being the consequence of these papers' policy of free discussion on all matters of public interest.

The later century saw a great expansion in publishing – national daily, weekly and Sunday newspapers suited to all educational levels. The attitudes of such newspapers may not have complimented insular local newspaper viewpoint, but supplanted it with a wider mass-cultural outlook. There would have been an integrative effect on the Irish through their reading about popular matters published in national newsprint. Given the assumed concordance between the Irish and Catholicism, also influential from the mid-Victorian period, was reading that was available to Catholics. Merrell spoke of an impressive variety of Catholic material that was directed at the educated reader, such as the *Tablet*, the *Dublin Review* and the *Month*, but it was mainly the *Universe* a weekly penny paper that was in reach of the working multitudes.[198] The Coventry Young Men's Society (CYMS) ran a reading room for which Catholic newspapers were purchased. Irish newspapers were available on order from English newsagents but such an arrangement reduced easy access and lessened readership.

For long, newspaper copy was not conveniently accessible to the masses because it was not until after the Education Act of 1870 that there was general competency in reading. The *Standard* newspaper with its brand of self-righteous criticism of the Irish

---

[197] Donald M. MacRaild, Irish Immigration and the 'Condition of England' Question: The Roots of an Historiographical Tradition, *Immigrants and Minorities*, Vol 15, No 1, March 1995 p. 70

[198] Catherine Berenice Merrell, 'The Late Victorian Roman Catholic Periodical Press and Attitudes to the 'Problem of the Poor', Unpublished PhD Thesis, De Montfort University (2001) http://hdl.handle.net/2086/4782 Accessed 23rd March 2019

and Catholic Church may not have been read by many townsfolk and may not have influenced the degree of aversion that might have existed on the streets of Coventry. Uninformed townspeople may simply have sustained their prejudices on deep-rooted, fundamental anti-Irish and anti-Catholic coarse stereotypes.[199]

Contributions relevant to the Irish ranged unevenly from trite snippets to lengthy, dense, polemical letters, articles, and parliamentary dialogues. The snippets were scattered around the pages of a newspaper, and because of their convenient size, boiled-down directness, accompanied by an attention drawing sensational headline, may have been more widely read than column-length closely argued pieces. These short pieces may have had more impact, but not in a positive way, if as often they did, make jokes at Irish expense, or report with overdraw on a drunken Irish row. But the longer articles too, if less inviting to read, provided the high-minded dialectic to give legitimising cover and justification to those with raw street-level prejudices. Until later in the century papers were not designed to cater for the public at large and according to Brown at mid-century were 'aimed squarely at educated readers, leisured and active'. He does point out that while a mass audience was not the goal of newspapers they were 'nonetheless read by (and read to) a wider spectrum of society, often in public venues such a pubs, barber's shops, coffee houses and mechanics institutes'.[200] It may have been through the large number of Coventry pubs that the import of reports reached illiterate migrants.[201]

The reveal of newspapers

They were a most potent medium throughout nineteenth-century Coventry; their reactions best tell of the city mood. In these newspapers were direct local references to the Irish, mostly unflattering about their conditions and behaviour. Such pejorative

---

[199] G.D. Paz, Anti-Catholicism, Anti-Irish Stereotyping and Anti-Celtic Racism in Mid-Victorian Working Class Periodicals, *Albion*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Winter 1986) pp. 601-616

[200] David Brown, Cobden and the Press, in Anthony Howe & Simon Morgan (eds.) *Rethinking Nineteenth-century Liberalism: Richard Cobden Bicentenary Essays*, (Aldershot 2006) p. 81. The John Gulson Free Library was opened in 1869 but it is not clear if it provided newspapers to read. According to Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (eds.) *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland*, (London 2009) p. 515 the provision of a reading room usually on the ground floor of public libraries, to permit the examination of newspapers, was customary from the inception of such libraries.

[201] In these public houses they might hear stories brought by friends from nearby Birmingham about Protestant mobs, police brutality, or a sermon referring to Ullathorne's aversion to Fenianism. These information transfers may have potency, as verbal communication conveyed passion. Structured intolerant newspaper articles, in an ironic pointing to the intolerances of the Roman Church could never have the same catalytic effect as a lecturer in a hired public hall expounding on 'Romish errors'. (The *Standard* 26th August 1864 reported on the riot in Jersey when T.G. Owens came from London to lecture on 'Bible Truths and Romish Errors'.).
Many Irish in Coventry would have come in recent years from Dr MacHale's diocese and would have been reared in an atmosphere infused by his sentiment referred to above. Oral delivery of information even if in a tacit manner might appeal to those Irish who were cautious and clannish.

publishing lessened considerably in the 1870s. The city newspapers provided to their readers sufficient century-wide information about Ireland itself, which in a broad way, kept the nature of Irishness in public discourse. See Appendix 15. Hawkins referred to Ireland as a 'recurring *bête noir*' for governments, involving difficulties, e.g. over famine alleviation or demands for self-rule.[202] There was heightened local newspaper attention exhibited on occasions when kingdom-wide concern was raised over issues affecting the island. Those that were distressful, evoked local sympathy, and those which showed Irish contrariness or unlawfulness drew outrage. These sentiments must have affected local attitudes to migrants. The reports, articles and letters published, all outlined the unsettled, precarious and poverty riven state of the Irish masses. For much of the time, Ireland appeared as a place throwing up problem upon problem. Since the problems seemed intractable and solutions seemed unattainable, printed contributions were often written with a censuring, exasperated, bluntness that must have convinced some of the municipal population that the Irish were a fickle, lazy, troublesome and subversive race. Again, often proclaimed in newspapers, as existing in Ireland were 'Irish' type peasant frailties, such as: backwardness, rebelliousness and subservience to a Catholic clergy. As a consequence, a sort of flawed national character seemed the norm, and to some degree this must have also been seen as applying to the Irish in Britain resulting in their being treated with suspicion and disdain.

A newspaper might cite the Catholic Church's behaviour in Ireland to question how deep was Roman Church loyalty or ecumenism, or as exemplified by its control in Ireland, what it would inflict if had the opportunity in Britain. Also mentioned might be how a foolish government showed its ineptness, in its failure to understand, that disestablishment of the Church in Ireland would shake Protestantism in Britain as well as Ireland.[203] The *Standard* was to the local forefront in this type of charge. Certain legal adjustments or accommodations appropriate and essentially relevant to Ireland provided enough reason for latent anger and defiance to flare in Coventry newspapers against Catholicism and nationalism. Appendix 15 provides an indication of the sympathy shown in Coventry to matters Irish over the years.

Also at certain times in Britain during what Ó Tuathaigh called 'public excitement', as exemplified by the Fenian alarm or the destination of the Irish vote in parliamentary elections - Irish matters could directly impinge on the Irish in Britain and

[202] Angus Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture: 'Habits of Heart and Mind'*, (Oxford 2015)
[203] Later in the century the same argument was employed by Unionists that any offer of home-rule to Ireland would shake the foundations of the British Empire.

newspapers reflected this.[204] Naturally the newspapers were outraged by Fenianism and spared no words in castigating this secret movement. Their thundering denunciation must have created an atmosphere in the compact city of Coventry, where people and police were known to each other, that many Irish steered clear of Fenianism, while those with Fenian sympathy may have let their leaning rest unspoken.

The impression taken away from the coverage in the local papers is, that while the misdeeds of Irish individuals were reported often in a mocking style to amuse the readership, and while the Irish as an ethnic group was seen as deserving blame and criticism for many aspects of its situation, culture and behaviour, there was very rarely any direct editorial criticism of the Irish who lived in Coventry. Perhaps nothing needed to be said; people drew their own conclusions on simply reading about the fervid rows of the Irish, or could read between the lines that it concerned Irish persons if there was an 'Irish' surname referenced.[205]

Similarly while the Catholic Church was assailed in the papers with the most biting criticism levelled at Popery and the 'Romish' Church, there was no orchestrated criticism made of the local clergy or denigration of local Catholics. The latent anti-Catholic passions that eventually drew the Irish into physical conflict with the English in nearby Birmingham, Wolverhampton and elsewhere seem, if such existed in Coventry, to have found the extent of their expression within ordered newspaper sentences. A general antipathy in print to the Catholic Church was in evidence up to the 1870s while reporting on local Irish anti-social behaviour was at its most devilish from 1850 to 1870. Later in the century the papers themselves and their contents display less sustained hostility, though occasional snide articles could appear. There were far fewer mentions in local newspapers of court hearings with a negative Irish stamp but this could be simply due to there being fewer incidents to report.

[204] Ó'Tuathaigh, Irish in Britain: problems of integration, p. 30

[205] The *Coventry Times* 27th February 1867 reported that Thomas O'Neill a 'labourer, a vicious looking fellow' was charged when he struck and kicked a police officer seriously injuring him and tearing his coat when he had been removed from a lodging house in Much Park Street. James Maguire his companion was charged with trying to rescue O'Neill from custody. No reference to their being Irish was made in the report but the clues were obvious. These two would appear from the 1871 census to be then in Walsall and had not settled in Coventry. Their unsettled stay in Coventry even if their Irish background was never mentioned could only have left a continued bad impression of Coventry Irish.

Chapter 2

Character of Coventry

It emerges from nineteenth century Coventry newspapers that writers often referred with a fond regard to Coventry as 'the old city' or 'ancient city'.[1] It was a city that to them had an especial character. The awareness of the archaic nature of the city that has imbued such writing, alerts this study to the rich historical legacy bestowed to the municipality. However, due to the confines of this periodic study, enquiry here sidesteps the engaging story of its medieval past when it, rather than Birmingham, had national renown. Also this survey of the nineteenth century city must necessarily narrow its deliberation here to those aspects of the environmental, social and economic setting that contribute to an understanding of the experience of Coventry's Irish residents. The most dynamic periods in the life of three Coventry acclaimed industries, were during the nineteenth century which permits their happenings to be presented as largely a self-contained Victorian package.

The chapter opens with a description of city form, and the influences that prevailed in the early nineteenth century. It was not a city in profound transition at the beginning of the century. Its form then seemed long-fixed in the layout that took shape in earlier centuries. Its established silk industry ran on domestic production lines. While it had the standing of prime town in its own county, it could also be considered a drab and introverted market town. It possessed an entrepreneurial spirit but its livelihood was concentrated, and becoming over-reliant on the unstable demand of the silk trade. It was a traditional city in the early nineteenth century with a significant number of its populace content to continue weaving and pricing in the same fashion in the following year as they had done in the previous one. It may bear description as an artisan or a craft-workers city; its entrepreneurial and industrial disposition has been raised, but neither of those momenta, or 'coketown', 'factory town' or 'boomtown' are entirely appropriate to functionally label the city. Perhaps the word boom may justifiably be applied to the 'big purl' time in silk production early in the century as it might also apply to its final decade of cycle assembly. Finnegan states in an introduction to her York study that she was 'concerned with a particular sub-section of the poor' which drew her straight to the slums of the city.[2] This study's concern is wider and its canvas is stretched across a city. It is therefore necessary to outline the morphological and

---

[1] For example the *Coventry Herald* 5th November 1875 reported that on the opening of Messrs Newsome and Yeomans new watch factory Major Caldicottt 'expressed a hope that other manufacturers would follow their example, and that ere long we should see many such factories as theirs in our old city'.
[2] Finnegan, *Irish in York*, p. 3

social characteristics of all districts of the city where Coventrians resided. There is a focused account of the growth of the built area noting the stages of development of townscape units and whether they could be distinguished as distinct social areas. The well-being of the populace depended not only on living conditions which are noted but also on the economic vibrancy of the town. Thus the natures of its three renowned industries are acknowledged, albeit very briefly given the exigencies of the format of this study. Finally, there is reference to the character of the city; to those aspects of the affairs of the city that gave it a particular mood which was, if not welcoming to all Irish neither was it openly and persistently hostile to them.

2.1 City growth

Lying in the centre of England, the strong walled city of Coventry was the fourth city of the kingdom in medieval times. In 1451 Henry VI conferred on it county status, but by the nineteenth century it had lost much of its renown. Its city and county prestige had been swept away in 1842 and its regional importance was then much overshadowed by Birmingham - a city of the Industrial Revolution. Coventry's walls had been raised in 1662 on the orders of Charles II but the line of the city walls contained still in the 1820s, the built up area with its medieval street pattern.[3] In this area admirable half-timbered houses built during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were interspersed with brick houses of the eighteenth century.[4]

Through the medieval core, from west to east ran the Birmingham Old Road through Spon Street, Fleet Street, through the narrow Smithford Street, High Street, Earl Street, Jordan Well to Far Gosford Street and thence to Leicester or Rugby. Crossing High Street with the axis at Broadgate was the north-south road from Nuneaton to Warwick. Access from Broadgate to the Warwick Road was improved after 1812 by the construction of Hertford Street. Broadgate was a short street that was widened between 1820 and 1823 to form a rectangle that represented the town centre square. To the east of Broadgate stood two churches in proximity, that of St. Michael and that of the Holy Trinity each of which controlled a parish (roughly covering areas of the city to the south and north respectively). Much Park Street, off Earl Street and Jordan Well, led south to the London Road. The radiating roads such as Spon Street to the west, and Gosford Street continued by Far Gosford Street to the east acted as spines along which old stock housing and lengthy courts at right angles were attached. Of the 55 numbered courts in Spon St, Court No 48 entered through an archway, alone contained 28 houses. The

[3] David McGrory, *The City of Coventry, Images From The Past*, (Upton 1996) p. 7
[4] Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, p. 24

fields in the angles intervening between such 'spine' roads were only built over later in the century. The Spitalmoors district, i.e. the fields north of Gosford Street and Far Gosford Street, reaching towards the southern edge of Hillfields was built over only from the 1860s onwards by the triangular arrangement of Raglan Street, Alma Street and Lower Ford Street. The integration of many bicycle works with housing along such streets reveal this was the area attracting infill then. Also to the south Hertford Street lined with select shops and banks connected Greyfriars Green to the city centre. From the early nineteenth century Greyfriars Green was surrounded by elegant housing and maintained its residential attraction as the century progressed. Along its west side ran Warwick Row with long ornamental gardens behind, on the east side was a stylish terrace of substantial houses called the Quadrant and a number of detached villas in their own grounds, e.g. Fernilea, Avonmore, and Greylands.

At mid-nineteenth century the manufacturers and professionals continued to reside centrally in e.g. Little Park Street. They were also resident in suburban villas in their own gardens along Binley Road and in the Radford Road-St. Nicholas Street area.[5] There was some lateral expansion west along Spon Street towards Spon End, and beyond that again from 1846, when Chapelfields was developed with streets of watchmakers' houses. In the area intervening Hertford Street and Spon Street, in the vicinity of Butts Lane, development occurred in 1820s with terraced streets north of Butts Lane such as Thomas Street and Moat Street (Figure 2.2). Building around this area was intense and houses in Trafalgar Street backed right up to the River Sherbourne. In 1828 to the north east of the city building of the Hillfields suburb commenced which was an area that attracted skilled weavers.[6] This area was extended at mid century to include Aylesford Street, Leigh Street and Bradford Street. North of the city wall, houses were built near Leicester Street. In 1845 Norton Street, Jesson Street, Bird Street and Ford Street were developed between the wall line and Swanswell Pool, with Hales Street created to link this area to Bishop Street.[7] Bath Street, Queen Street, Spencer

---

[5] 'The City of Coventry: Buildings: Domestic buildings', *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (London 1969) pp. 146-150. URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16023 Accessed 21st October 2014. Charles Bray who was an influential mid-nineteenth century intellectual lived in one of these houses called 'Rosehill'; 'The City of Coventry: The outlying parts of Coventry: Harnall, Radford, and Whitmore Park', *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (London 1969) pp. 71-77. URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16013 Accessed 21st October 2014

[6] Kenneth Richardson, *Coventry Past Into Present*, (Chichester, 1987) p. 5

[7] 'The City of Coventry: Introduction', in W.B. Stephens (ed.), *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (London 1969) pp. 1-23. URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16005 Accessed 21st October 2014

Street and Swanswell Street were mid-century creations in this area.[8] The extent of the city and its central area in 1851 are shown in Maps 2.1 and 2.2 and in 1869 in Map 2.3.

At the beginning of nineteenth century the poor of the city lived in timber framed houses in secondary streets. From this time the centre of the town started to become overcrowded and according to Prest very congested. He told that in 1830 in the centre of Coventry, shops, warehouses, slaughter houses, and ribbon manufactories were unplanned and haphazardly 'crowded together, almost up to the walls of St. Michael's and Holy Trinity churches.[9] Palmer Lane, New Buildings, Leicester Street, Well Street, West Orchard, Cow Lane, Much Park Street mark out a band of dilapidation about, and indeed into the commercial core. Opening after opening along streets like these, accessed courts that occupied every scrap of ground. The irregular shapes of yards and lanes throughout were the product of antiquity. In a street like Much Park Street the courtyards were established in the elongated gardens at a subsequent time to the building of the streethouse. In areas a little beyond, freshly developed in the nineteenth century which show regularity in street pattern, at the time when their streets were first laid out, the fullest advantage was also taken, to squeeze in courts. Castle Street beyond the central area possessed a number of lengthy courts featuring back-to-back housing running at right angles to the street itself.[10] It is to be marvelled at how ingeniously the courtyards were designed to interlock, or abut each other, so that every inch of ground was utilised. This could involve a back-to-back arrangement of courthouse and street-house. There was an 'Alice in Wonderland feel' to some locations such Palmer Lane, White Friars Lane and College Square. They had other wider entry points but popular access was through archways off prominent streets. Hotchpotch throughout the city were to be found houses in named 'Rows', 'Buildings', 'Terraces' and terraced 'Cottages'. There were labyrinths of connecting lanes and narrow rows in the central area around Cook Street and also about the Bull ring. While they appear chaotic in pattern, they were a lymphatic system that provided direct walking routes and acted as pedestrian highways.

At obvious fault for the congested state of the city was the growth in population which had almost doubled between 1801 (16,000) and 1841 (30,781). This population

---

[8] Beyond Coventry stretching from Foleshill as far as Nuneaton were villages involved in silk weaving who looked to the city as an administrative centre but had a less prosperous, more backward and distinct trade from that of Coventry. The countryside south of the city e.g. Whitley, Pinley and towards Stivichall was in complete contrast purely engaged in agricultural activity, nonetheless these farmlands were enumerated by the census as part of St. Michael's parish.

[9] Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, p. 24

[10] There were no courts in the watch making district of Chapelfields at the edge of the city.

increase was due to people flocking into the city seeking employment.[11] Some caution is necessary about regarding population pressure as the only cause of overcrowding given Lowe's remark, in relation to Lancashire:

> 'There is evidence that unhealthy and overcrowded dwellings were not simply the result of a shortage of housing, although supply of inexpensive housing certainly lagged behind demand. Working-class families crowded Lancashire housing to economize and reduce the proportion of their incomes that had to be devoted to rent'.[12]

However the main cause of congestion was due to the severe constraint on the city from spreading outwards except in Hillfields. Beyond and almost surrounding the city core boundary, represented largely by the line of the old wall, was a necklace of common land, Lammas lands and Michaelmas Lands (Total 1,000 acres), over which the freemen - weavers, had rights.[13] They fiercely resisted any change in their use until 1860. A map of 1887 shows an expansive Park Gardens with its nursery stretching between Warwick Road and London Road. It was still pressing on its north side against the southern edge of the built up area (as represented by the southern tip of Little Park Street) and blocking potential city growth southward. The open area of Poddy Croft behind the Barracks was only marked out in the 1880s for street construction. Significant development commenced in Earlsdon late in the century, although large in scale when it did. Both Hillfields in the late 1820s and Chapelfields in the 1840s had proceeded due to release of lands belonging to Sir Thomas White's Charity (Figure 2.1). This constricting band of untouchable lands forced housing development in long back gardens, yards and lanes behind housing in the principal streets.[14] In these long gardens speculators, in order to maximise rent return, compressed cheaply built small terraced houses. Top floors were often added as weaving workshops. Entrance to individual courts was through a narrow passageway from the street which effectively created an isolated world behind the street.[15] Over the century industry continued to intrude into the built-area. Weaving shops and factories premises abandoned on the collapse of the silk trade in the 1860 were now occupied by bicycle and engineering works (Figure

---

[11] 'The City of Coventry: Introduction', pp. 1-23

[12] Lowe, *Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire*, p. 51

[13] Patrick Murphy stated that Nottingham faced the same problem; the city was held in a vice by the failure to enclose the common lands. (Murphy, Irish in Nottingham, p. 83).

[14] 'The City of Coventry: Introduction', pp. 1-23

[15] *Coventry Standard* 29th June 1849 An enquiry was undertaken by William Ranger, under the Public Health Act of 1848 as to whether a local board of health should be established. Ranger described the effect on the city in 1849 that resulted from the constriction of the common lands: 'These lands very materially injure the health of the city, its trade and intelligence. Its health, by confining multitudes to over-crowded localities, from want of building accommodation; its trade, from want of power to extend and enlarge the town; its intelligence, because, since the town has no suburbs, no villa residences, all who are not engaged in trade or professions, and who have time for thought and study, are obliged to seek a home elsewhere'.

2.3). New factories were built on any available ground (Map 6.8).[16] The arrival of new workers seeking employing in the bicycle era led to the building of new streets. In other areas however, late in the century, in areas represented by suburban Earlsdon, where successful watchmakers resided, there was little intrusion of industrial works and they possessed a solid, uniform, residential feel.[17] Distinct social areas were generally emerging after mid-century. The response of the affluent is visible in the town plans of Coventry which show the growth of select town terraces (Appendix 13), and at the then edge of the city detached villas identified by house-names, in their ornamental grounds built alongside the radial roads. There were growing areas of homogeneous street pattern and house type later in the century; houses still exist today in areas to provide evidence of the particular social grouping that originally resided there.[18] Usually newer housing built at the prevailing margin would roll out further the same type of social area already at the edge. Working class areas tended to advance to the north and east while middle-class suburbs grew more towards the south and southwest. A more leafy residential development occurred in the southside of the city.

Condition of areas of town

While the Irish were popularly associated with degraded living conditions, what follows tell that these conditions - before any Famine influx - were more widespread than contemporarily acknowledged. In 1843 J.R. Martin tasked with reporting on the sanitary condition of Coventry remarked, that in comparison to most manufacturing towns Coventry possessed a 'sombre and unfavourable appearance'.[19] This was due, according to him, to the fact that many houses in the centre of Coventry were

[16] The OS Map of 1889 showed to the west of the city: Leigh Mills (Silk, Worsted & Cotton) in Ryley Street, Eagle Iron Works close by in Bond Street, the Lion Iron Foundry, Exchange Ribbon Factory, and Victoria Mills (Ribbons) in West Orchard; both of the latter to the edge of the Sherbourne. On the other bank, on the Well St side was the Vulcan Iron Works, Meteor Works and Albion Mills (both Bicycle and Tricycle). Abutting the Sherbourne behind Fleet Street was Fleet Works, and St. John's Works (both Bicycle & Tricycle), a Silk Dye Works, and a nearby Watch Factory. St. Nicholas Mill (Coach Lace) and Albion Foundry (Brass & Iron) were in King Street, Rotherhams Watch Movement works in Spon Street while the large and tall Rudge Works (Motor & Cycle) in Crow Lane was a sign of times progress.

[17] 'The City of Coventry: The outlying parts', pp. 48-50

[18] On infilled lands in Spitalmoor between Gosford St and Hillfields, or in the vicinity of Bishopsgate Green/Widrington Road might be found the low-cost, plain, minimal street-width terrace house where the door opened directly onto the street, or was protected by a miniature 'garden' as represented by Craner's Road (Figure 2.4). On infilled lands at Windmill Fields, and also in Earlsdon might be found substantial terraced houses with bay windows on one or both floors, more recessed front doors with open tiled porches, fronted by small gardens and style flourishes of the particular builder.
Northumberland Road, Figure 2.5, is representative.

[19] Second Report into the state of large towns, p. 259. Martin, in the report that included Coventry, inspected with a similar eye Nottingham, Leicester, Norwich and Portsmouth. It is clear that the prevalence of overcrowding, unhygienic, dismal courts, lanes and alleyways was not confined to Coventry. The existence of common lands which surrounded three quarters of Nottingham severely constricted the development of the city, just as had occurred in Coventry. Similar lamentable descriptions were given for poorer districts, usually in the older parts of the towns of Leicester, Derby, Norwich and Portsmouth.

constructed on a timber frame, in the sixteenth century fashion, with irregular frontages overhanging the streets which increased the gloom of those streets. It was also due to the fact that the streets were narrow, crooked, poorly arranged and unpaved. Neither were they properly lighted or cleaned. Off these badly ventilated streets were to be found a myriad of lanes, close packed courts, yards and alleys in 'every direction and of the worst description'. Martin stated: 'Bad and unhealthy quarters are plentifully distributed through Coventry, and may be found a few yards in rear of any street in the town, in the form of court, alley, or lane' and that even in districts regarded as healthy he added 'there are many small yards and courts where the inhabitants are so huddled together and so ill-constructed, that disease takes root in the human frame as though the locality itself was pestiferous'. He identified the most wanting areas:

> 'Amongst the worst localities are Dog Lane or Leicester Street, together with Brewery Street, Swan Street, Tower Street, and Henry Street,--- all decidedly unhealthy. These form one neighbourhood, and its mortality bears a high proportion chiefly from epidemic fevers of various characters and types: typhus being prominent, along with dysentery, cholera, and diarrhoea. Palmer lane, which lies extremely low, and under which flows a foul stream of the River Sherbourne, is one entire mass of old rubbishy houses, scarcely one of which ought to be inhabited by human beings; and yet all are densely occupied by very poor people. The same description will equally apply to a great portion of the buildings of Lower Well Street, and to an extensive court called Caldicott's Yard,--- a most offensive compound of everything detrimental to health.'[20]

Martin singled out the neighbourhoods of Cow Lane, Warwick Lane, Greyfriars Lane, Barrack Yard, Much Park Street and St. John's Street as neglected and unhealthy, while parts of Spon Street were notoriously unhealthy. He identified those locations near the river which carried the refuse of the town, as having a tainted atmosphere and most susceptible to serious disease.[21]

Martin's report, describing the houses occupied by the working classes, mentioned as typical a court house that measured 18 feet from front to back and 12 feet wide. This contained a kitchen 12 feet by 10 feet, a pantry and coal hole and a staircase leading to two bedrooms. It was not unusual that these bedrooms might be used for business purposes while an upper story could contain weaving looms.[22]

---

[20] Ibid., p. 259

[21] Ibid., pp. 249-294

[22] Ibid., p. 259. His report complained about the manner in which houses were provided which led inevitably led to their deterioration and the creation of health and environmental problems. There was 'the ungenerous principle of erecting the greatest possible number of dwellings on the smallest space of ground, ill-arranged, ill-constructed, and ill-provided for' that had been 'got up in the cheapest manner possible, finished off a little tawdrily to allure tenants, but formed of rough and unsubstantial materials. The interior, in a short time, becomes dirty, and begins to crumble to pieces'. Once occupied they were neglected by landlords and tenants alike and soon fell into disrepair. Many were built back to back with little use of party-walls to protect against fire.

As poor as the condition of these houses that each generally housed one family, they were superior to what could widely be found in the older part of the town that dated back centuries. There he instanced 'houses three stories high with one entrance and without ventilation, containing three or four families, one over the other in each house'.[23] Prest described the conditions where the people lived without lighting or paving in developments that were in-fill, as having 'too little air, bad water taken from a standpipe, or possibly a well, which served a dozen or several dozen families, and with cesspits and no main sewer.[24]

Coventry's conditions were analogous to Birmingham according to R.A. Slaney who inspected the latter.[25] A positive reference to Coventry is found in the Report on the Health of Towns 1840. Therein Joseph Fletcher said 'there is a material distinction between Coventry, and the towns in the south, from those in the north; the habits of the people of Coventry are remarkably superior to those of the people of Macclesfield and Manchester; their homes are humble, but their habits of cleanliness, compared with those which prevail in the north are quite conspicuous.'[26]

In the almost twenty years before enclosure commenced in 1860, which allowed the city to grow outward, the majority of the 2,000 houses built were located in Hillfields. While such housing helped to relieve congestion in the centre city courts according to Prest it aided division in the class structure:

> 'For the last hundred years the working men of Coventry had been crowding into these courts. Good workmen and bad workmen rubbed shoulders in the same court, or lived in adjacent courts. Now, however, with the opening of the new suburbs, it was the better class of weavers and other working men, corresponding closely to the freemen, who were extricating themselves from the old city. In their new quarters there was air and light, and though many of the roads were still badly made up, the houses were well built, and there gardens and allotments. The standard of living of those who could remove to Hillfields, or Chapelfields, or Earlsdon was going up, while the old courts became slums, and those who lived in them, degenerated into slum dwellers.'[27]

He noted the result of this process of spatial differentiation:

> 'Hillfields was to become the home, not only of so many of the upper class of freemen weavers, but of the cottage factory, while the old city was to become the home of the lower class of weavers and of the factory. Over a period of thirty years, however, from 1830 to 1860, the working class in Coventry was divided into two'.[28]

---

[23] Ibid., p. 259
[24] Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, p. 26
[25] R.A. Slaney, *Report on the State of Birmingham and other large towns*, (London 1845) pp. 5-11
[26] Report from the Select Committee on the Health of Towns 1840 (384) p. 69
[27] Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, p. 41
[28] Ibid., p. 41

Causes of problems affecting the health of Coventry

The lack of adequate housing provision was but one of a number of serious problems which affected public well-being. There had been frequent incidences of epidemics; cholera had broken out in 1832, 1838 and again in 1849 while influenza had swept the city in 1837. In the years 1840, 41 and 42, the mortality rate was 2.6% annually, while the English average was only 2.2 % and in several districts below 2.0 %. Child mortality was excessive and there was also a large number of dependent widows and orphans.[29] Already inadequate infrastructure was strained by the increased population. Problems had arisen due to non-enforcement of local laws or ineffective municipal action. Twenty years after building commenced in Hillfields of c2,000 houses there were no sewers, or any kind of underground drains 'the sullage is discharged from the houses upon the surface where it lies stagnant to the constant annoyance of the inhabitants' while 'none of the roads…have ever been made, and in wet weather the wheels literally sink up to the naves, the ruts containing stagnant water and filth unfavourable to health'.[30] There was no integrated sewer system for the city (or indeed map of the same), or a regular and coordinated disposal of refuse. There was a failure of the general populace to perceive that their well-being might be improved by individual basic actions such as ventilating houses. Municipal improvements were hindered as many courts were in private ownership.[31]

However there were more than environmental conditions affecting the well-being and health of the populace.[32] Dr. Balbirnie in 1843 attributed the prevalence of chronic diseases to 'close confinement, cares, poverty, the exhausting labours of an ill renumerated trade, and inadequate and innutritious diet…there are derangements of the digestive functions, primary and sympathetic, anomalous nervous affections simulating more formidable diseases of almost every texture, general cachexia, or vitiated and wasted constitution, without any marked local disorder; these are *par excellence* the

[29] Second Report into the state of large towns, p. 263
[30] *Coventry Standard* 29th June 1849
[31] The efforts of a court owner minded to improve were hindered because there were no neighbouring drains available. There was concern raised that municipal improvement on public health promoted a 'centralizing principle' by 'sanatarians' and would 'burden' the rates. *Coventry Standard* 29th June 1849. It was also believed that municipal upgrading would reward those who had profiteered through shabby construction in the past.
[32] Martin identified in 1843 five serious issues which put at risk the health of the populace in Coventry: 1. Lack of a comprehensive sewerage and drainage system. 2. Inefficient disposal of refuse and the existence of earth middens. 3. Inadequate provision of public water for drinking, street cleansing and fire suppression. 4. Absence of sufficient burial space for the increased population. 5. Obstruction of the River Sherbourne by obsolescent dams that had turned the river into a filthy state. (Second Report into the state of large towns, pp. 260-266)

diseases of the weavers'. He was in no doubt the prevalence of consumption among the poor was caused by 'the miseries of long-continued poverty and bad diet'.[33]

Martin wrote in the early 1840s, which was a time of depression, with consequent unemployment and falling wages:

> 'The wages of workmen engaged in the silk business ranges from 5s. to 10s. per week, very few indeed rising above this latter sum. The uncertainty of labour subjects the operatives to the most severe and trying privations.'[34]

Approaching 1849 valuable insight can to be found on the state of the city at a named street level. Raised on concern over the prevalence of epidemic and contagious diseases in fifty streets, and a higher than average national death rate, an enquiry was undertaken by William Ranger, under the Public Health Act of 1848 as to whether a local board of health should be established.[35] His report found that 'the atmosphere of the town is unanimously described as tainted and impure in the extreme'. He found 'The labouring portion of the inhabitants are chiefly occupied in the manufacture of ribbons, silk, and watches, many of whom work in confined and ill-ventilated habitations – evils to which those who work in factories are less subject'. He stated the prevailing diseases were epidemics like scarlet fever and typhus, and that the latter and diarrhoea had induced a great mortality.[36] Ranger viewed the city as being 'literally hide-bound, and the occupants of dwelling in lanes, yards, &c., exposed to wretched existence'. He described the environment and the scale of the overcrowding:

> 'The streets generally are long but narrow, and mostly tortuous;…there are no less than 164 courts, alleys, and yards, in numerous instances without any thoroughfare, and approached by long covered passages 7 feet high by 3 feet wide, containing 1,813 houses, occupied by 7,408 persons….the greatest amount of overcrowding prevailed in Dog lane, Brewery street, Leicester row, and Swan street'.[37]

---

[33] Second Report into the state of large towns, p. 262

[34] Ibid., p. 263. Martin wrote: 'Bread, potatoes and tea, undoubtedly constitute the staple diet of the working classes, with a very small proportion of butchers' meat, dependent upon the state of trade and earnings. Of firing in winter hundreds of families are certainly unable to procure a sufficient supply, although a large quantity of charity coal is annually distributed to the poor of Coventry during that season'. His report stated that there were 'too many instances wherein the pressure of poverty, inability to maintain decent appearances in clothing and household comforts have led to a low and grovelling mode of living; and much immorality – especially immorality of language – prevails amongst the young of both sexes, more especially those who are employed in factories'. He saw further evils in factory employment. 'The mothers are taken away and their infant children are exposed to every conceivable disadvantage in the hands of other junior members of the family, or of children hired for the purpose at a trifling sum per week'. (Ibid., pp. 262-263).

[35] *Coventry Herald* 23rd February 1849

[36] Mr Wyley a surgeon stated to Ranger in regard to Spon Street, Sherbourne Street and Albion Street: 'Children especially suffer from low fever and diarrhoea; the air of the dwellings is foetid, the poorer class being very reluctant in attending to ventilation; on visiting the houses he frequently opened the windows, but they were closed again as soon as possible'. (*Coventry Herald* 29th June 1849)

[37] He provided some examples of this overcrowding: 'In Lamb and Flag yard [Spon Street], a woman with daughter, 19, son 16, and four other children, all sleep in one small room. There is no outlet at back,

He outlined the toilet arrangements and repeated Martin's comment of some years earlier about the condition of the river and environs.[38]

Ranger further remarked on streets directly relevant to this study. Palmer Lane where cholera had broken out in 1832 was described as in 'wretched condition', some of the buildings were 'extremely filthy' with many offensive courts, privies, ash pits and cesspools; in the middle of the lane a sub-drain opened upon the surface. Well Street was very unhealthy with many courts similar to Palmer Lane, while Caldicott's Yard had experienced 'typhus of a bad character'. St. John Street abounded with yards right and left, where open privies and ash-pits were to be found, and when fever appeared, it was of the worst kind. In some of the yards at the top of Much Park Street, there had been very aggravated cases of fever. These yards were private property, over which the Council had no control. In New Buildings there were no water closets and the privies were common to a number of houses.[39]

Heightening concern in 1849 was, coincidental to Ranger's investigation, an outbreak of cholera. At a public meeting held to adopt measures to treat the cholera outbreak the necessity of 'enforcing a prompt abatement of nuisances' was emphasised.

Attention was drawn to an open drain in Palmer Lane where its contents flowed for a considerable distance. The speaker mentioned as an example of some of the habitations in that neighbourhood, a family adjacent to his own premises 'living in a room in the immediate vicinity of a slaughter-house, very dirty, and destitute of water'.[40] See Map 2.3. Following quickly on Ranger's Report, on 30th July 1849, under the auspices of the Public Health Act, the city council was established as the Local

---

nor are there other means of ventilation. In Phillip's yard the number of persons average 8 to a house, 7 sleeping in one room, 12 feet by 10 feet, on two beds. At Caldicott's yard I found a man, wife, and 5 children occupying a room 12 feet by 6 feet. In several other cases as many as 7 persons occupy one small room for sleeping, 12 feet square. He believed 'The crowding together of the working class is extremely prejudicial to their comforts and morals, subversive of social decency, productive of disease, mortality, destitution, and injury to the health and well-being of the inhabitants generally'. *Coventry Herald* 29th June 1849

[38] He outlined the inadequate toilet arrangements: 'The better houses generally have privies and covered soil pits but by far the greatest portion have only open soil-pits, and the number of privies vary from 1 to each house to 1 to 17 houses, containing 64 persons; whilst the average in 163 courts, yards, &c., does not amount to more than 1 privy to 6 houses…Aggravated by close proximity of the pits to the dwellings occupied by large families, being in some cases within two feet of the entrance; consequently the inmates are constantly subject to an intolerable stench. In other instances the ground floor is actually appropriated to a nest of four privies and open pits, and the upper rooms in one instance are approached by outside stairs. The houses and courts not being generally with ash-pits, vegetable matter and offal with other filth is either thrown into the privy pits or into the streets'. He regarded the failure of the public scavenger to cleanse courts, alleys and undedicated streets as a serious evil. Public cleansing of streets left much to be desired. He noted the river which was loaded with the refuse of the lower part of the town saturated the soil of areas in its vicinity. These areas had an 'impure state of atmosphere' and suffered from 'aggravated forms of disease'. *Coventry Herald* 29th June 1849

[39] *Coventry Herald* 29th June 1849

[40] Ibid. 14th September 1849

Board of Health. It turned its attention in 1851 to improving drainage and Ranger was asked to return and advise on drainage requirements. He recommended an arterial sewer system to which every street would be connected and the abolition of cess-pools. Work commenced on the recommended sewer system in 1852 which continued during the 1850s. Attention was also given to the suppression of privies and cesspits and the imposition of building regulations. According to Prest the public health issues were being addressed vigorously by the 1850s and the death rate falling to 2.3% indicated this. John Vice Inspector reported to the Board of Health on 7th September 1852 'that the streets have been properly swept during the last fortnight and the sweepings removed; the watering has not been done…there not being a sufficient supply of water. I also beg to state that I am unable to make a correct return of lodgers for the last fortnight, some of the lodging house keepers having been summoned and convicted for not conforming to the Bye-laws'.[41]

A new waterworks was commenced in Spon End in 1845 and completed in 1847. By 1851 Prest could note that of a total of 8,000 houses 3,500 were supplied by mains water and that the health benefits must have been enormous as in the absence of a sewer many of the wells in courts that were close to cesspits must have been contaminated.[42] Other municipal improvements were the removal of two of the obstructive dams on the Sherbourne in the 1840s which in reducing the risk of flooding around Pool Meadow area, allowed building to occur there.[43] A new thoughtfully designed, landscaped cemetery was opened beside London Road in 1847. Poole described a more regulated environment that was coming into existence at mid-century. White Street, Bird Street, Baker Street and Norton Street in the vicinity of Swanswell Pool 'were efficiently sewered and paved, and the gas and water mains laid through them'.[44]

Some aspects of the difficult conditions of life for families are further considered in Appendix 12. The regular reports from 1874, when Wicklow-born Mark Fenton became Coventry Medical Officer of Health (Appendix 2) revealed the continuation of unsatisfactory living conditions which affected people's health. For example in 1877 he stated that there was an 'insufficiency of house accommodation for the working classes of Coventry'. He referred to the 'cosignant occupation of houses in such a condition as to be totally unfit for human habitation, and the general overcrowding of all houses of this class. He said this impacted on the health of the people and especially the health of

[41] *Coventry Standard* 10th September 1852
[42] Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, p. 38
[43] 'The City of Coventry: Introduction', pp. 1-23
[44] Poole, *History of Coventry*, p. 24

the children. He noted that scarlet fever existed in the city and the existence of slaughterhouses in the 'most thickly inhabited neighbourhoods'.[45]

2.2 Industry

Ribbon making

By the end of the 18th century Coventry had become an important centre of ribbon manufacture and was 'bound to its fortunes and misfortunes'.[46] After the 'big purl' time there were periods of trade prosperity, with Searby recognising that the years from the mid-1830s to 1860 were more prosperous than the period before 1835, with 'fewer downswings in the climb'.[47] The 1850s were years of steady growth; many steam looms were installed in factories where efficiency allowed wages of operatives to rise, and the use of steam was also applied in cottage factories. Yet it was a dubious prosperity. There was an underlying trend of decline whose significance was not sufficiently appreciated and which culminated in the collapse of the trade in 1860. Over the years it was a trade affected by the whim of fashion, seasonality, periodic depression and an oversupply of weavers. It faced competition from superior productive methods in other cities and from the variety and quality of imported silk weavings. Tariff reductions were introduced in 1826, 1846 and 1860 on competing imported goods and in 1861 it endured a tariff imposition on its exports to the United States. Its skilled weavers could not, or did not keep timely pace with the implications of the arrival of steam power and changing technology on efficiency. Home weavers had so revered traditions of individualism, ossified work practices and arrangements for payment at fixed prices, that such veneration had created an inflexibility and inability to adapt. Within the constraints of relevancy, the entangled but engrossing history of this trade cannot be completely unravelled or fully outlined; thus only the most salient points are sketched.

A typical first-hand journeyman worked at home in Hillfields, on perhaps two or more looms which he owned, aided by his wife and family and often assisted by an

---

[45] *Coventry Standard* 2nd February 1877; *Coventry Times* 31st January 1877.
He reiterated the link between the poor quality of housing and infectious disease in 1884 on his looking at the death-rate in White Friars' Ward which was three times higher than the neighbouring Earl Street. The ward contained a large proportion of the poorer classes 'whose conditions of life favour a high mortality rate. [However] Some of that excess was due to zymotic disease, particularly diarrhoea. The most serious sanitary defect …is the manner in which the houses are built in courts and yards along the line of the streets, so closely as to entirely prevent the proper circulation of air around them, while the houses in many instances are of the oldest and most unwholesome description quite unfit for habitation. In 1891 he would write that he had frequently pointed out in his reports how injurious to health was courthouse construction of which there was a 'striking' number - 'many of these houses are some centuries old, with low ceilings, low and small windows and doors ways and are so closely crowded together…' Light and air could only enter from one side; through ventilation was impossible as they were one-sided or back to back. ([*Coventry Herald* 15th February 1884; *Coventry Herald* 17th April 1891).
[46] 'The City of Coventry: Social history from 1700', pp. 222-241
[47] Peter Searby, Chartists and Freemen in Coventry, 1838-1860, *Social History*, Vol. 2, No. 6 (Oct., 1977) p. 763

apprentice. The weaver collected his supply of yarn each week from his 'manufacturer' or 'undertaker' and returned the woven ribbons on his next visit. He worked at his own pace; perhaps taking Mondays off to do some gardening, and in a crescendo of work over the rest of the week, to make up for time lost earlier in the week, completed the ribbon weaving task.[48] The freedom of such weavers to work to their own schedule appealed greatly to them and they feared being confined in a factory.[49] This superior class owned or were prepare to pay a good rent for their houses, lived in comfort and had kitchen ranges. When trade was good they could afford meat but even in normal times could afford a sufficiency of food.[50] These working men had 'bourgeois virtues' and as freemen had a 'stake in society'. The independent spirit of Coventry emanated from this group. In 1838 there were 1,828 of these first-hand journeymen of whom 214 were women. They worked 3,967 looms of which just under 80% were worked with the assistance of their families (Table 2.1). With their families they accounted for a total of 6,796 persons. In the mid-1830s a first-hand journeyman earned 21s. per week working with family members on two looms.[51]

Another group that lived in smaller two roomed centre city houses, the second-hand journeymen, also called the journeymen's journeymen, who worked for the first-hand journeymen or in the factories, were not as well-off. It was a younger transitional group and with young families was exposed to any fluctuation in trade.[52] According to Prest they had a 'slightly' lower standard of living because they earned less.[53] A varying account in the *Victoria County History* stated this group lived 'in a most demoralising state between the loom-shop and the workhouse'. The seasonality of the silk production cycle which was slack in winter and busy in spring meant these journeymen could find themselves without work in the winter months and reliant on poor relief, charity, and borrowed money for two or more months each year. There were 878 men and 347 women totalling 1,225 in this group of whom 852 worked for first-hand journeymen and 373 in factories. With their families they accounted for about 2,480 persons.[54]

Beneath them although the precise number is unknown it is believed were several hundred factory hands that also lived in the small houses in the congested city centre. At the bottom, female ancillary workers earned as little as 5s.[55] All payments must be seen

[48] Coventry: Past into Present. p. 32
[49] Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, p. 38
[50] Ibid., p. 67
[51] Ibid., p. 66; Searby, Chartists and Freemen, p. 763
[52] 'The City of Coventry: Social history from 1700', pp. 222-241
[53] Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, p. 75
[54] 'The City of Coventry: Social history from 1700', pp. 222-241
[55] Searby, Chartists and Freemen, p. 763; Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, p. 75

against rising prices, uncertain continuity of work arising from strikes, seasonal and less predictable trade depressions. It is not an easy task to delineate the economic or social position of those engaged in the silk trade. On the economic and social continuum the ribbon manufacturers and ribbon masters and indeed first hand journeymen can be positioned to one end of the continuum. There was a broad central mass whose individuals are less easily placed because firstly their occupational titles and circumstances are described or understood differently in various accounts. Some were economically stagnant, others quietly sliding towards the misery of poverty, and still others through the frugality of 'Malthusian' behaviour, by not marrying or having few children, might accumulate enough to purchase a loom in order to upgrade their status.[56] Some without traditional skills and not of a high social standing may have, as operatives in the expanding factory system of the 1840s and 1850s, come to enjoy rising wages, perhaps quickly frittered away, that were not available in pre-steam motive days. Cutting across this were the seasonal and periodic depressions which caused reductions in weekly income or unemployment that led to uncertainty of economic status. It was a feature of the industry that when demand lessened, work was held back for the factory and less work was put out to outworkers.

From the early 1830s in order to increase efficiency and reduce costs there was movement towards a factory based system.[57] In 1838 there were twenty seven loom-shops or factories but it was not then a factory town.[58] Prest remarked that Coventry 'epitomized the old order' and 'had fallen behind the times and the organization of the silk ribbon weaving, remained more characteristic of the eighteenth than of the

[56] 'The City of Coventry: Social history from 1700', pp. 222-241

[57] The 'old' manufacturers up to 1830 had been paternalistic and generous and these qualities seemed to have elevated the spirit of Coventrians. However 'new' manufacturers, not having capital reserves, were tougher in their approach and less concerned about paying a living wage. Thus wages were reduced, women permitted to work on the engine loom and half-pay apprenticeships arranged. At its simplest the 'old' manufacturers were facilitated by 'undertakers', many of whom later became the 'new' manufacturers. The move from a benign spirit of fraternalism to a commercial based method of operation offered greater supervision and control. This reduced disagreements over the amount and quality of silk given out to home weavers. Working evenly throughout the week and not in a rushed tired fashion as the weekend approached, could produce cloth less likely to be flawed. However this led to attempts by weavers to play off the 'old' against the 'new' while undercutting the 'list of prices' was to engender bitterness and distrust.

[58] Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, pp. 45-47. Figured ribbon Jacquard machines were common in Coventry but steam power was more suited initially to turning machines that produced plain ribbons and was introduced without demur in the black plain-ribbon production in Derby, Congleton and Leek. However when Joseph Beck attempted to open a factory with looms worked by steam power in Coventry and employing young women to manage his looms, weavers who feared that these new methods would lessen the demand for labour, in Luddite manner burned down his factory in November 1831. This oppositional behaviour unfortunately stalled the introduction of steam mechanisation for six years allowing competitors in other towns to gain edge, and only changed after the rivals in the north introduced fancy ribbons.

nineteenth century'.[59] There was among the domestic weavers a 'complacent belief in the rightness of their methods' fostered through years of protection until 1826.[60] They clung to a list of prices believing it essential if they were not to destroy each other in a race to the bottom.[61] Edward Goode a weavers' leader, said in 1832 that 'the pauperising effects of steam power, as applied to manufactures…may be seen at Manchester and other places'.[62]

From the 1830s, tolerance for the list system lessened and there was less cordiality shown during trade disputes.[63] There was a division in interest to emerge among the weavers, though all the while represented by the one weavers association. There was the first-hand journeymen living in Hillfields, who as time went on came to work less advanced looms but who were accustomed to a higher standard of living and for whom the maintenance of the list system was an imperative. There was in the centre of the city the journeymen's journeymen who did not own a loom and might work for first-hands or in a factory. Beneath them also in the centre were the factory operatives who depended on a weekly wage that improved with factory efficiency, and so were less reliant on the list system.[64]

In 1838 two manufactures used steam to power 53 looms but this increased through the 1840s and 1850s.[65] In 1846 tariffs were removed nationally on textiles but retained at 15.0% on silk which ensured a relative prosperity for Coventry as a practically monopolistic producer of ribbon.[66] By 1857 over 2,000 looms were powered in factories that employed 5,000 workers. Details of the six principal firms are shown in Table 2.2 .

---

[59] Ibid., pp. ix-x
[60] 'The City of Coventry: Crafts and industries', pp. 162-189
[61] Searby, Chartists and Freemen, p. 763
[62] Searby, Weavers and freemen, p. 117. They also tried to have payment according to the lists, rather than weekly wages, introduced to the factory system. They disliked factory competition which jeopardised their way of life, standard of living, and which lessened the distinction between artisan and labourer. They regarded factory life as coarse and conducive to immoral behaviour. Factory operation they believed, ruined family life because in taking women away from the home children would be neglected. They disliked the prospect that their freedom to plan their time and pace was to be replaced by the discipline of the factory clock and by the continual attention needed to oversee powered factory machines. After serving a seven year weaving apprenticeship to qualify as skilled and then becoming a freeman of the city, it must have been to the dismay and anger of many weavers that their effort to become self reliant and independent was being demeaned and made irrelevant by the advent of the factory system. Weavers detested the indoor apprentice system which had served to restrict an oversupply of weavers was being replaced by half pay outdoor apprentice factory based schemes. (Peter Searby, Paternalism, Disturbance and Parliamentary Reform: Society and Politics in Coventry, 1819–32, *International Review of Social History*, Vol. 22, Issue 2, (August 1977) pp. 215-216).
[63] 'The City of Coventry: Social history from 1700', pp. 222-241
[64] Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, p. 75
[65] Ibid., pp. 49, 93
[66] Searby, Chartists and Freemen, pp. 762-763

National demand for ribbons grew and the 1850s appeared to be a time of prosperity and advance; many steam looms were installed - some in topshops, but many in factories (Table 2.3).[67] The unceasing struggle between employers and weavers had continued over the years until the ultimate confrontation ended in disaster in 1860. Serious disputes had occurred in 1840, 1842-3, 1848, 1854, 1856 and 1858. Underlying, and prior to each dispute there was usually a periodic slump. When this occurred, the piecework rates of 1835, that remained standard in the trade, were abandoned. Depressions had occurred in spring 1837, from late autumn 1840 to spring 1843, throughout much of 1847 and in the early months of 1848, in autumn 1854 and in the beginning of 1855, in the second half of 1857 and in the spring of 1858, and in the disastrous spring of 1860.[68] As years went by, the disputes became more of a labour and capital issue; a weavers versus employers confrontation.[69]

A response to the factory system that enabled the weavers to take advantage of steam power but maintain their independence was provided by the cottage factory system. However even using larger more advanced a-la-bar looms they could not compete with the productivity of the large factories.[70] In 1858 the weavers pressed for the reintroduction of the list of prices to those factories paying weekly wages. The six large manufacturers led by James Hart were targeted with the intention of withdrawing labour from one factory at a time. The manufacturers responded by stating that if there was a strike at one factory there would be a lock out at all of them. All six

---

[67] Searby, Weavers and freemen, pp. 217-221. By 1860 most ribbons were made in factories and the less efficient outdoor system was under greater attack. Wages in factories improved particularly in the 1850s with wages between 12s. and 14s. offered in 1855. Meanwhile outdoor weavers were paid according to the list of prices drawn up in 1835 a situation that intensified the hostility of the domestic weavers. Taking the cost of living into account the spending power of a weaver in one of the most productive factories was double that of a journeyman weaver of 1835. The domestic weavers could not increase their earning capacity until the 1850s, when if they switched to the more advanced a-la-bar loom their real income (operating two a-la-bars) trebled relative to 1835. If they remained attached to the engine loom (and worked two) relative to 1835 they would be worse off in 1839 and 1840, considerably better off in 1851 and slightly worse off in 1860. There was a three to one ratio in favour of the a-la-bar loom by 1860, with an incomplete census showing 3,412 a-la-bar looms and 1,052 engine looms in operation by domestic weavers.

[68] Searby, Chartists and Freemen, p. 763; Searby, Weavers and freemen, p. 213.

[69] Prest, Industrial Revolution in Coventry, pp. 88-92

[70] This could be seen in Hillfields where existing rows of houses were converted and new ones built in squares that could accommodate steam motivation. In a typical terrace of weavers' houses the third or top floor of each house was the workshop with enough space for up to three looms. In such a row a single shaft was installed that ran through all of the workshops and was turned by a steam engine at the end of the row. One engine could power 100 looms and approximately 40 tenants. This arrangement became popular in 1847 and was a serious alternative to the factory system. In 1859 Coventry had fifteen large factories with 1,250 powered looms and 300 cottage factories with between two and six looms each. A total of 383 cottage factories were recorded in 1860. Two large designed cottage factory schemes were begun: by the benevolent Quakers, the Cash brothers, at Kingfield beside the canal where 49 of the planned 100 houses (there was an ultimate vision of 300) were constructed in 1857, and Eli Green's 67 house triangular arrangement in Vernon Street, Brook Street and Berry Street was built in 1858-9. (Ibid., pp. 94-106).

manufacturers stood firm and the dispute began in September 1858. The pressure on the factory owners through strikes and a degree of intimidation, was so intense that after eight weeks five of the six large factory owners capitulated. Prest observed that 'the outdoor weavers and the factory weavers had shown an astonishing unity…What had happened is, perhaps without parallel in nineteenth century England…the outdoor weavers had for the time being humbled the factory system itself'. As a result large factories were no longer built after 1857 and those that were built were in the style of the cottage factory. While the strike of 1860 is often blamed for ensuring the ruination of the Coventry silk trade it was the strike of 1858 which created bitterness and anger that resurfaced in the responses of those involved in the 1860 strike and lock-out[71].

In 1860 the Cobden Treaty eliminated tariffs on the importation of silk goods.[72] The market was inundated with continental ribbon which was superior in design to that of Coventry. In disputes over the years between themselves, the weavers and manufacturers, shielded behind the tariff wall, had been distracted from the real enemy. The treaty was announced in February 1860 and by April there were thousands of weavers unemployed.[73] In July a group of 44 employers withdrew from the list. They refused a request from the weavers to accept the list but with agreed lower prices, which resulted in the weavers calling a general strike. There was bitterness on both sides but especially among the manufacturers where it had become pent up from the previous dispute. Due to the intimidation of workers the town was no longer sympathetic; the police were more obvious on the street, the magistrates warned against violence and shopkeepers were accused of refusing credit. The factory weavers were being advised not to continue supporting the domestic weavers. Since all weavers were on strike there was little in the strike fund, which had already been exhausted by the 1858 strike, and the situation became desperate. Some weavers taking the best terms on offer were already returning to work, such that early in 1861 the strikers gave in without obtaining any return to the list. Wages were cut in half and for many there was no work to return to. The distress and misery over the winter had been great; there was destitution and

[71] Ibid., pp. 112-118

[72] Gutteridge who was out of work for over a year because of the strike pointed out that it was not simply the Cobden treaty with France that ruined the industry. The Morrill Tariff at 40 to 60 percent on imports to the United States affected the sale of silk goods from 1861. A silkworm disease in France reduced supply by four fifths thereby steeply increasing the price of the raw material. Silk goods were thus no longer affordable for many and the fashion turned to feathers. (Chancellor, *Master and Artisan*, p. 178).

[73] The *Freeman's Journal* on 11th April 1860 reported: 'Great distress exists among the riband workers of Coventry, owing to the stagnation of trade, which has thrown thousands out of employment and the rest upon half time, and which is attributed to the uncertainty that has prevailed ever since the announcement of the French treaty.'

dependence on relief.[74] A fund to alleviate the suffering raised £40,000. The strike had also proved ruinous to the manufacturers with stock having to be auctioned; of the more than eighty that existed at the beginning of the strike only twenty remained by 1865. In March 1860, 383 cottage factories were occupied but a year later only 198 were tenanted. Eighty three were occupied by new tenants, 25 were vacant and 9 were idle. Conditions worsened and by the mid-sixties two-thirds of the weavers were women and children, who found work for half the year on wages reduced by up to 40.0%. Most retrograde, in order to save on steam young boys – 300 in 1866 – were used to manually power looms again. By 1884 the number of power looms had fallen to a third of those in operation in 1860. The stagnation continued for years and ribbon weaving never again regained its position as Coventry's foremost industry; this role by 1886 was undertaken by the cycle industry.[75]

Between the census of 1861 and that of 1871 there was a decline of 1,534 persons in Coventry; this figure may not truly capture the extent of an early 1860s exodus as the population may have been rising again toward 1871. Prest wondered did many of the workers leave for nearby Birmingham, or Leicester, or Lancashire; the latter advertised locally for workers. He noted that it was popularly understood in Coventry that many had gone overseas.[76] In the decade following the Cobden Treaty in 1860 imports of French ribbons free of 15.0% duty trebled to £3 million, while in depressed Coventry production fell from £2.5 million to £1 million. The city had not taken account of standardized production that permitted lower pricing and styles suited to the general market. A writer in the *Times* 16th September 1867 criticised the blindness of enterprise for so long failing to recognise the danger that surrounded it from competition. He was reproachful about the fact that while this was occurring imports flooded the country.

> 'Well you carried out your principles of big watches and heavy ribbons out-working and slow production and I have seen your skilful and intelligent artisans walking the streets in forced idleness and wan poverty. I have seen your workshops empty, and your property depreciated in value, your capital wasting and your trade decay.'

---

[74] In September 1859 there were 310 persons availing of outdoor relief. This rose to 837 in September 1860, to 1,228 in March 1861 and to 2,540 in September 1861. The relief offered was mean spirited with the poor law board insisting on the able-bodied picking oakum in order to obtain the relief. Searby refers to Abijah Hill Pears, a paternalist ribbon manufacturer, who declared 'that many of the weavers reduced to penury held respectable positions among their fellow men, and had been in the habit of having many social comforts around them. They were now in necessity and very great distress, having parted with almost all their domestic furniture and clothing; but they cannot and will not bring their minds to have the appearance of public beggars.' (Peter Searby, The Relief of the Poor in Coventry, 1830-1863, *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (Jun., 1977) p. 356).

[75] The *Coventry Standard* 22nd April 1865 stated that Mr Baker, the Government Inspector of Factories noted the depressed state of the Coventry ribbon trade in his report for 1864-5; 'The City of Coventry: Crafts and industries', pp. 162-189

[76] Prest, Industrial Revolution in Coventry, pp. 119-133

The *Victoria County History* saw an uplifted spirit in the town as the 1860s progressed. A cotton mill was opened in 1867 supported by Lord Leigh. Some companies in order to survive diversified into elastic webbing and specialised forms of ribbon making i.e. Stevengraphs.[77] Watchmaking regarded as superior to the declining weaving trade, and bicycle production which begot an end-of-century golden age in Coventry are outlined in Appendix 13.

2.3 Disposition of Coventry

An air of calm deference was to be found in Coventry; there was little recourse to violence in disputes over conditions of work. Searby remarked that in Coventry 'middle-class aspirations were readily accepted' by artisans.[78] The voting rights of the freemen meant that workers/weavers believed they were not outside the decision making process. To become a freeman of the city a person had to have served an apprenticeship, to one and the same trade for seven years, and thereafter make an application to the town clerk.[79] Searby observed 'Many weavers were freemen. Their common good fortune helped to create complaisance and a pervasive moderation of conduct'.[80] He further explained that:

> 'Weaving and the freedom sustained deference, in different ways, but both were correlatives of paternalism. The weavers' experience created bonds of unity and sympathy. Freemen's privileges divided groups within the working class from each other and gave to freemen a respect for hierarchy and the settled pattern of society'.[81]

The activities of many weavers were mundane and self-interested. They were occupied making their living in good times, surviving in bad and having a continued resilience during agitation, maintaining the list of prices, adjusting from engine, to a-la-bar or jacquard looms and to the factory system.

---

[77] 'The City of Coventry: Crafts and industries', pp. 162-189; Stevengraphs were woven silk pictures and bookmarks.
[78] Searby, Chartists and Freemen, p. 776
[79] A freeman of the city could not only vote in parliamentary elections but also had the right to pasture two cows and a horse, or two horses and a cow throughout the year on the common lands and from Old Lamas (1st August) or Old Michaelmas (29th September) to Old Candlemas (2nd February) on the Lamas and Michaelmas lands. As the proprietors of these lands did not have absolute control over them due to this pasturing they could not be sold. A ritual clearing away of any fences or buildings that could be deemed to be preventing access to the freemen was held each year by the chamberlain and freemen restating their rights. Disputes over the future of these lands continued throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, and the problems their non-availability for housing caused, in constraining the population of the city into cramped streets and courts, was well noted in reports on public health. Because of the strength of freemans' votes the two local members of parliament would not risk facilitating any legislation to permit enclosure.[79]
[80] Searby, Weavers and freemen, p. v
[81] Searby, Chartists and Freemen, p. 776

There was a benign approach to those in poverty. Coventry's relief of the poor, according to Searby, could be described as paternalist till the late 1820s, to the extent that outdoor relief supplemented wages.[82] From the 1830s cut-backs were necessary as the high rates imposed were not sufficient to cover the expensive relief. While this caused hardship the city still had a kindly disposition after the passage of the Poor Law Act in 1834, even in the face of pressure from the Poor Law Commissioners to administer relief with greater stringency.[83] After 1844 under the full force of the commissioners' instructions the operation of poor relief was mainly through the workhouse and led to an austere regime. There was a realization in Coventry, not shared by the commissioners, that due to depressions many decent weavers could fall on very hard times. Out-relief and charity maintained some dignity; it was not believed locally that it served best interest by weavers having to be demeaned and their spirit of independence broken by being forced to submit to picking coconut fibre or oakum, or enter the workhouse in order to obtain assistance. The particular nature of the weavers' trade meant that forcing unemployed weavers into the workhouse would result in the selling of their looms and the risk of their becoming permanent paupers.[84]

Deference was also inculcated by the paternalistic presence of well-endowed charities in Coventry which according to Searby were 'agencies that created deference'. The strength of their disbursal power is shown when the £1,700 annually dispensed in Coventry is compared to the £150 doled out in Leicester in the 1820s. The weavers of Coventry were restrained and made deferential by the paternalism of manufacturers in Coventry. Paternalism in upholding the list of prices suited manufacturers in Coventry as it avoided damaging competition. It was also paternalism without self-advantaging ulterior motives, in that the payment of a living wage was good for all including the shopkeepers who depended on a healthy economy.[85] The local citizenry responded to public appeals for finance to help weavers in years of stress. This paternalism caused the weavers to moderate their behaviour. The weavers realised that public collections in time of slump would be less generously supported by the middle class if criticism for the miserable circumstances was class based. The magistrates and respected

[82] Searby, Relief of the Poor, pp. 346

[83] The city sought through reliance on a local act to keep itself at a distance from the influence of the Poor Law commission. In 1843 the Poor Law Commissioners complained that in Coventry the net average cost of poor relief per person 'probably exceeds that of any manufacturing town in the north of England'. 'The City of Coventry: Local government and public services: Public services', in W.B. Stephens (ed.), *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick* (London 1969) pp. 275-298. http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16035 Accessed 14th January 2019

[84] Searby, Relief of the Poor, pp. 349-356

[85] Searby, Chartists and Freemen, p. 776

Coventrians had warned the weavers' leaders that continued support depended on restraint and an absence of conflict. Articulation beyond placard waving, processions or public meetings would not have evoked sympathy.[86] The individualism, the aspirations, the self-concern of the domestic weavers and their freemen's character ensured social discipline and staidness except where their own interests animated them. Weavers were 'working men from necessity and not from choice and their individualism was not conducive to the growth of such political and social action as was found in the factory centres of the north'.[87]

Following the Chartist years the atmosphere of deference and paternalism was not as pervasive. In the 1850s the presence of a strong outwork industry operated by men in comfortable circumstances, underpinned by the list system, being astonishingly assisted by factory workers, meant that a simple class based antagonism towards manufacturers appears absent.[88] A working class consciousness had not clearly emerged in the ribbon trade during the period under review in Coventry. However over the years with more manufacturers becoming magistrates some of the weavers began to see differences between the manufacturers and themselves in terms of class struggle. These differences became more pointed where there was physical intimidation of workers who continued to work during a strike (Appendix 16).[89]

The city manufacturers did not call on 'outside' labour during strikes; behaviour which might have annoyed Coventry workers. Allowing for the burning of Beck's factory as an aberration, it is still to be recognised that over the years despite the overarching harmony and restraint, there was low level degradation and violence in the fabric of the city. The appearance of calm and an absence of overt violence could have been maintained by the threat of violence and low level intimidation (Appendix 16). There were parliamentary election campaigns and rallies and the recurring spectacle of the Godiva processions that could arouse collective passion, though equally it might be

[86] Ibid., p. 764
[87] 'The City of Coventry: Social history from 1700', pp. 222-241
[88] Astonished in the sense that although well paid in years of expansion factory hands would strike against their own interest, to support the greater weavers' cause.
[89] On 7th November 1831 Josiah Beck's silk mill with its powered looms was burned down in a Luddite manner during a riot by Coventry weavers The destruction of Beck's factory contradicts the self-restrained image of the city, that while capable of being exorcised about issues, its response always stopped short of violence. However the behaviour at Beck's factory is generally explained as the exception, a one-off occurrence and the result of a spontaneous combustion of feeling. Beck did not suffer any permanent injuries and within twenty years the matter was largely unremembered locally. It was seen as a mobbish action which the weavers' leaders condemned and which prompted those leaders at the time of the fire to enrol as special constables. It would appear to have served as a warning as to what could happen if matters were allowed to get out of hand, and brought about a determination that in order for violence to be avoided at all costs settlements should be reached. Searby actually saw a remarkable 'discipline and moderation' in the mob's behaviour illustrating to him 'qualities profoundly instinctive and habitual' in the city. (Searby, Paternalism p. 222).

said such parading and rallying provided occasions in the city where any build-up of populist steam could be vented.[90]

The city seemed to have entered a stagnant era marked by demographic decline following the shock of 1860-61. Those who left may have been the motivated while many of those who remained may have felt distressed and lacking a spirit of confrontation. Beaven and Griffith wrote of the period of Coventry regeneration and inward strong migration resulting from the growth of the cycle industry coupled with the emerging motor cycle and car industry from the beginning of the next century. They noted it required workers that were semi-skilled and young and by the end of the century the city had become a magnet for such from the midlands and southeast. There were two responses to the altering of the social composition of the city. Dominated by the presence of employers from the traditional industries and retailers, and not by industrial capitalists as in Birmingham, the council spent little on municipal renewal. The boom had created fresh housing slums to emerge but there was little sustained municipal housing action between 1870 and 1914. Secondly there was a general perception that Coventry was in civic decline. The prosperity had caused crime to increase as wrongdoers had come to the city looking for cycle work. The authors noted that it was stated in the *Herald* in 1891 that Coventry was becoming rougher with blame attributed to rowdy young cycle workers.[91] They quoted the *Graphic* in 1914 where it observed that:

> 'the city has not absorbed its new people into its old history, traditions, and ways. There are two peoples, the one a settled and fast dwindling race, natives and those of long residence, whose outlook embraces the old and the new period; the other the newcomers, who contribute little'.[92]

Since they were from elsewhere they were seen as having no civic spirit or local patriotism; engaged in semi-skilled monotonous production, their focus went little beyond squandering in an unruly manner the good wages they could earn on overtime during busy periods.[93] Yates in 1950 writing about the turn of the century stated:

> 'Coventry was not a bad place for the ordinary man, at least the hundreds who came to it, from elsewhere thought so…The public houses were open all hours of the day and night, so were the shops, and a sixty-hour working week was common in the factories. There was more drunkenness…. But the biggest worries of the ordinary man and woman in the street were the fear of unemployment (involving

[90] McGrory, *Coventry*, pp. 229, 230
[91] *Coventry Herald* 14th August 1891
[92] *Coventry Graphic* 24th July 1914
[93] Beaven & Griffiths, *Urban Elites*, pp. 1-18

> the workhouse) and…the desperate overcrowding'. He saw too in this time a sheer grinding poverty that 'existed in "prosperous" Coventry'.[94]

In such a milieu after 1870 the Irish arrivers of mid-century may have seemed a less noticeable concern, who in a turnabout were now regarded as persons of 'long residence' rather than boisterous newcomers.

[94] John A. Yates, *Pioneers to Power*, (Coventry 1950) pp. 19, 44

Chapter 3

Circumstances of the Irish in Coventry to 1875

The previous chapter established the features of a compressed municipality, with its occasional periods of prosperity, accompanied by stretches of deep economic relapse. It is the intention of this chapter to consider the migrants in relation to this locale and their involvement in the weaving trade recently outlined. Consideration is given to influences that brought migrants to settle in the city. The conditions they experienced and the reputation they created are then explored. The approach here is to attempt to find a number of illustrative vicinities where the Irish were present but not necessarily where they resided in highly significant numbers. Good fortune offers a selection of written and visual source materials that together provide enhanced portrayals of a number of streets, lanes or courtyards that also constituted residential vicinities for Irish migrants. Edward Greenhow's Report to the Privy Council published in 1860, undertaken at a perfect time to inform this study, suggests a number of meaningful Coventry loci where the source materials as mentioned can be collectively employed to advantage.[1] This chapter proposes to raise awareness that within its reference time, two relatively different inflows in origin and character occurred. A pre-Famine contingent that engaged with the city through participating in its silk trade was followed by a post-Famine coterie, a section of which in the initial settlement years displayed anti-social and criminal behaviour.

3.1. Influences on the selection of Coventry by Irish migrants

Central location

Ravenstein was convinced that long distance migration to London was achieved by using a gradual town to town migration process.[2] Coventry was on the direct route from Liverpool or Birmingham to London, and the town being a day's walk from Birmingham, may well have served as a resting town for a period for those whose ultimate destination was the capital. The significance of Coventry's stop-over location is shown in relation to the workhouse which had to alleviate a large number of transient vagrants as was explained in 1837: 'we were troubled to an immense extent, Coventry being upon the Liverpool road, with mendicants and vagrants of this description'.[3] The *Coventry Herald* 21st May 1847 recorded: 'Irish Vagrants - We understand it is the

[1] Suitable contemporary visual materials are scare for Coventry and when a judiciously selected, later-dated image is used as evidence, more anachronistic paraphernalia in the image must be ignored to appreciate the underlying actuality tendered.

[2] E.G. Ravenstein, The Laws of Migration, *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (Jun., 1885) p. 183

[3] Fourth Report from Select Committee on the Poor Law Amendment Act, with the minutes of evidence. PP. 1837-38 XVIII Pt.I. (145) pp. 22-23

intention of the Directors of the Poor in our City, at the suggestion of Dr Arrowsmith, to provide temporary or separate lodgings for the Irish vagrants passing through the town, in order to prevent contagion in the Workhouse'. The 1841 census suggests Coventry's resting role, where four households on Much Park Street, a thoroughfare that exited to London Road, routinely took Irish lodgers.

Liverpool was the usual port of entry for migrants from Dublin and western Ireland that were found later in Coventry. The city was equidistant from South Wales which was the entry area for many journeying from southern parts of Ireland. Steam packets travelled from Dublin to Liverpool from 1819 and their offer of cheap passage facilitated migration. [4]

With the exception of silk trade migrants, and those in a Coventry chain, the town was not a priority destination. Awareness of it came to those who were minded towards London or Birmingham. The former as capital city had drawn Irish migrants for centuries; a process strengthened according to Lees by easier sea access in the early nineteenth century.[5] Birmingham's spectacular growth since the second half of the eighteen century drew traffic into the Midlands. In 1834 Rev. Edward Peach, a Catholic priest in the city stated that on his arrival as a priest in 1807 he was in charge of no more than one hundred Irish but from 1820 there had been a considerable increase.

> 'About 1826 a vast increase took place, so that my chapel would not hold my congregation by many hundreds. There has not been such an influx since…The Irish Roman Catholics now under my charge amount to at least 5,000 or 6,000… many have come from Galway, Roscommon, Tipperary, Dublin, Drogheda.'[6]

Coventry in the heart of England was accessible. It was on the Lancashire to London axis via Stone, Lichfield, and Coleshill, (or via Stafford and Birmingham) and also on the main coach route from Holyhead to London via Chester, from the sixteenth century at least.[7] The Holyhead to London mail coach via Shrewsbury and Wolverhampton was altered to run via Coventry instead of Oxford in August 1817 and continued thus until May 1838.[8] On 7th August 1817 a notice in the *Dublin Evening Post* advertised the new return mail coach service running from the Swan with Two Necks, Lad Lane, London to the Eagle and Child Inn, Holyhead with the Inside fare £5.5s.0d and the Outside fare £2.12s.6d. and having a carrying capacity of four and three respectively.

---

[4] Jackson, *Irish in Britain*, pp. 6-7
[5] Lees, *Exiles of Erin*, p. 45
[6] Report State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain, pp. 1-2
[7] Harper, *Holyhead Road*, p. 15. The route via Lichfield, Tamworth, Hinkley, Lutterworth, Northampton to Hockliffe which by-passed Coventry was also followed.
[8] George Ayres, *History of the Mail Routes to Ireland until 1850*, (Lulu.com 2011) p. 42

In 1836 Coventry could be reached in twenty seven hours from Holyhead and in nine hours from London by coach. Ostlers, farriers, fodder providers, innkeepers, cooks, waiters and chamber-maids, would have encountered Irish people en-route through the town. This may have helped to bring understanding and acceptance of an Irish presence in the town since the Irish, travelling at some expense by coach would have represented to the town an aspect of Irish people that was prosperous, educated and relaxed in English society. Coventry was a nodal point in a local network of roads that linked towns such as Leicester via Warwick to Worcester, or to Oxford via Banbury. Coaches ran to Birmingham, Lichfield, Leamington, Cheltenham and Stratford-on-Avon.[9] If Irish migrants could not afford coach travel, the routes over which coaches trundled provided pathways towards Coventry. On a journey from Liverpool to Coventry towns, such as Warrington, Congleton, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stoke, Stafford and Wolverhampton were close by or on the route to Warwickshire and could have acted as halting areas.[10]

The advent of long distance rail travel in the later 1830s allowed greater ease of movement for migrants.[11] In Ireland it must have facilitated not only the seasonal harvesters but the emigration of, until then left-at-home wives and families, who would have found a long trek arduous. In Britain railways opened up the Midlands, as travel was possible between Liverpool and Birmingham from July 1837 on the opening of the Grand Junction Railway. From Curzon Street station in Birmingham it was possible to get a train to Coventry from 9th April 1838 when the London and Birmingham Railway was opened.

The North Railway facilitated movement by offering very cheap fares to those travelling in cattle trucks.[12] The north Wales railway line, offering the most direct and swift route to Coventry opened in 1850.[13] Though railway travel offered a speedy direct path to Coventry, not all arrived in an expeditious manner. The journey to reach Coventry could wend over several years, as was illustrated by the movement of Charles and Margaret Connor and the birthplaces of their children detailed in Table 3.1.

---

[9] Harper, *Holyhead Road*, p. 292

[10] J.A. Banks, The Contagion of Numbers, in Dyos H. J. & Wolff Michael (eds.), *The Victorian City: Images and Realities*, (London 1973) p. 117. Wolverhampton was referred to as Little Rome because of its association with Catholic recusancy. Until 1850 it was the seat of the Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District.

[11] It remains somewhat elusive in literature as to what method lowly migrants, especially with young families, employed to travel these long distances in the pre-railway era, unless it is felt that walking was so obviously what occurred that it does not need specific mention.

[12] Reports on Vagrancy, p. 16

[13] In 1853 the fare between Kingstown via Holyhead to a number of English cities was published. The fare increased according to the distance travelled and may have influenced choice of destination. A second class ticket to Liverpool was 15s., Manchester 17s.6d., Leeds and Sheffield 23s.6., Derby 25s., Birmingham 30s., and Coventry 32s. (*Dublin Weekly Nation* 5th February 1853).

Seasonal workers

O Grada suggested that in the mid-1830s between 35,000 and 40,000 were engaged in seasonal work in England and Scotland and by 1841 it was closer to 60,000. By the mid-sixties he considered a figure of 100,000 was not an exaggerated one. From the late 1860s numbers declined due to farm mechanisation. The coming of the Midland railway in Ireland had assisted movement through its promotion of special fares for harvesters and reduced what O Grada referred to as the 'economic distance' between the west of Ireland and Britain.[14]

In July 1824 the *Herald* was conscious that 'the great influx of Irish peasantry into this country, which is much on the increase, is an evil to our own labouring and agricultural classes which requires remedy'. While stating that it had no 'unkindly feelings towards the natives of the Sister island - far from it - we would not banish them from our soil' the underlying concern was clear that Irish labourers were taking scarce jobs which they saw as more particularly belonging to English labourers.[15] In February 1848 Aneurin Owen reported the master of Coventry workhouse as stating: 'Last year was the first year that the Irish harvest men brought over their wives and families, they used to come alone. While the husbands were last year in regular employment at the farmers ten miles away, earning 12s. per week, their wives and families would remain in the city begging'.[16] Peter Burke (Table 3.2; Chapter 3.5) in his family census entry for 1851, illustrated the movement of a family between Coventry and Mayo. It would appear they were married in 1838 in Coventry where John was born, then returned to Ireland for some years where Dominic was born before returning to Coventry between 1843 and 1849. The Irish were known to travel about seasonally in agricultural labouring gangs staying on farms in e.g. Cheshire, Shropshire and Derbyshire. However other labourers were city based and were prepared to travel six miles daily beyond the urban area so that their children could keep work in the towns. Chinn noted a large number of agricultural labourers in Birmingham at mid-century. In a compact town like Coventry, the countryside was in close proximity and thus agricultural labourers had even quicker access to the countryside. Migrants might change from the initial town of settlement once they had become more aware of what surrounding towns had to offer. There was a contingent of Irish, mainly agricultural labourers, in Stourbridge in 1851 clustered in Hughes Entry and George Walk. They appear to have come lately with their families from Ireland; the recentness of arrival indicated by births of their Stourbridge

[14] Cormac O Grada, Seasonal Migration and Post-Famine Adjustment in the West of Ireland, *Studia Hibernica*, No 13 (1973) pp. 51, 52, 54
[15] *Coventry Herald* 16th July 1824
[16] Reports on Vagrancy, p. 18

born which occurred usually within the previous year or two.[17] Table 3.3 shows how a young Martin Malone came from Mayo with his parents and family in the mid-1840s to Stourbridge. He would come to reside in Coventry in 1881 attracted by the prospect of building work. In 1868 Thomas Harris a farmer of 400 acres in Kenilworth, 8 miles from Coventry, stated that the men who provide extra help at hay and harvest time come from 'Coventry, Ireland, Buckingham and Berkshire'.[18] However from around this time it was being remarked that the number of harvesters coming from Ireland was diminishing considerably. This fall away continued for the rest of the century and was due in part to the mechanisation of farmwork.[19]

That a lesser number of temporary migrants was appearing, was not due to fewer migrants leaving Ireland. Many were still leaving but now taking an arduous, permanent option beyond Britain. In June 1893 a commissioner of the *Freeman's Journal* wrote 'At Castlebar I was witness to the usual painful scene of emigrants parting from their friends…Even in the present month they are departing in shoals'.[20]

The distinction between seasonal harvesters and vagrants was often not immediately apparent, a situation induced by the harvesters themselves who might present as paupers in order to be passed home as vagrants following the harvest.[21] Irish vagrants had been identified in Britain for centuries. In their historical establishment of suitable walking tracts, knowledge of cheap lodging houses and assessment of local benevolence, they offered, as precursors to the newer poor migrants, a useful means and guide to survival. From early in the nineteenth century the number of Irish vagrants was increasing; O'Leary mentions that following the 1815 post-war depression that vagrants travelled along two main routes from the ports of Holyhead and Liverpool and also from south Wales and Bristol to converge on London.[22] Redford stated that from the 1820s there was a noticeable increase making their way towards Birmingham and the other

---

[17] HO107/2035.65.26 – 36 ED 1c

[18] Commission on the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture (1867). Second report of the commissioners, with Appendix Part I. PP 1868-69 [4202] [4202-I] p. 227

[19] An interesting observation was made in 1893 by Edward Wilkinson, Assistant Commissioner, Royal Commission on Labour, about the agricultural labourers in Holbeach, Lincolnshire.

> 'There is less immigration at particular seasons than formerly…[when] a great many men came to the district, not only Irishmen, but Norfolk and Suffolk men. Still, a good many English-Irish, as they are called, that is, Irishmen whose regular home is in the big towns of the Midland, as well as Irishmen from Ireland come regularly.'

(Royal Commission on Labour. The agricultural labourer. PP 1893-94 [C.6894-VI] Vol. I. England. Part VI. p. 107)

[20] *Freeman's Journal* 27th June 1893

[21] Coventry Archives BA/E/2/55/1, 2 contain a handwritten statement of purpose from 1838, by the mayor and magistrates, together with templates of forms to facilitate the removal of Irish paupers to Liverpool. There is no record of how frequently they were used but their preparation must have been the result of concern about rising numbers.

[22] O'Leary, *Irish in Wales*, p. 25

large towns of Staffordshire and Warwickshire.[23] Vagrancy figures for Warwickshire are unhelpful in assessing the size of the problem in Coventry as the county results include within them those for a dominant Birmingham. When the public reached for stereotype, differentiation between the behaviour of Irish mobile migrants and wandering Irish vagrants was not deep; the indolence, craftiness, lack of commitment and begging antics of vagrants were characterised as traits of the Irish in general. Vagrants who came before the bench in Coventry were given one hour to leave town; they did not enhance Irish reputation but neither did they increase the number of Irish dwelling in the town.[24]

The Cavalry Barracks and the decisions of pensioned soldiers

Cavalry regiments that served tours of duty in Ireland rotated through Coventry barracks in Smithford Street in the very heart of the town.[25] These military tours may have resulted in information about Ireland being brought to the city and possibly raising interest in, and goodwill towards Irish people.[26] Some of these regiments had an Irish designation and had high Irish enlistment such as the 4th Dragoons who were resident in Coventry during the censuses of 1851 and 1861. Not only were they clothed in recognisable symbols of the realm but Coventrians could see Irish men in a complimentary light that came from being associated with smartness of appearance inherent in their cavalry costumes.[27] However the role of the barracks in augmenting the

[23] Redford, *Labour Migration*, p. 141

[24] The *Coventry Standard* 15th February 1850 reported 'Patrick Ford, a sturdy Irishman, was brought up by Policeman Symonds, charged with going from house to house craving alms, and pretending he was entirely destitute of food, at the time his pockets were crammed with bread, cheese , bacon, &c ... this time last year he was brought up on a similar charge, but was dismissed on promising to leave the town; but he had now not only returned and renewed his applications, but he had caused his wife and children to come from Ireland, and become strolling mendicants. - He was committed as a rogue and vagabond for 13 days imprisonment, with hard labour'.

[25] The 'Irish' named unit, the 4th Dragoon in Coventry in 1826 had been in Ireland from 1822-26, the 5th Dragoons in Coventry in 1830 had been in Ireland from 1821-1825, and the 17th Lancers in Coventry in 1837, had been stationed in Dublin from 1828-32. The 'Irish' named unit, the 6th Dragoons, resided in Coventry in 1841. The latter appeared to have arrived from Newbridge just before the census was taken on 6th June. They replaced the 10th Royal Hussars who left for Dublin. (Richard Cannon, *The Fourth, or Royal Irish Regiment of Dragoon Guards*, (London 1839) p. 61; Richard Cannon, *The Fifth, or Prince Charlotte of Wales's Regiment of Dragoon Guards*, (London 1839) pp. 74, 75) ; J. W. Fortescue, *A History of the 17th Lancers*, (London 1895) pp. 124, 125

[26] The *Freeman's Journal* on 10th September 1861 reported 'Yesterday morning seven officers and 150 non-commissioned officers and privates, and 124 horses of the 1st Royal Dragoons, embarked in the Windsor steamer at the North-wall, en route from the Curragh Camp for Coventry.'

[27] *Coventry Times* 10th July 1861 told of a 'grand day' in Coventry when Volunteers of the Warwickshire Rifle Volunteers were joined by other county companies to take part in a drill on Whitley Common.

> 'The afternoon being fine brought out numbers of townspeople to see the sight, …[eventually] many thousands had assembled to witness their movements…The ground was capitally kept by a company of the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards' The men were called on to give three cheers. 'This was done right heartily, the band striking up "St Patrick's Day". The vast concourse of people then moved towards the town, the volunteers preceded by the splendidly mounted Dragoon Guards; and altogether the whole affair was the most exciting and interesting military spectacle ever witnessed in this City.'

number of Irish-born actually settling in Coventry must have been slight because the regiments with their enlisted soldiers would have regularly moved on.[28]

At the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1812 many Irish-born soldiers would have stayed on in Britain following their discharge.[29] Brown points out that in Wiltshire many English soldiers had married Irish women who then brought up their children in the county. She noted too that Ireland held little attraction to pensioned-off Irish-born soldiers who would, if they had an English spouse, settle in the home village of the spouse.[30] Danaher dwelt on the possibility of Leicestrian soldiers while stationed in Ireland meeting Irish women and thereafter returning to settle in Leicester, however as there was no 'Coventry' regiment the same process would not have occurred in the town. Nonetheless, local-born men joined other regiments, with Army discharge records from the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham, Dublin showing 25 discharges of Coventry-born soldiers who had been stationed in Ireland between 1808 and 1821.[31] Some may have returned to settle locally with wives found in Ireland.

The army contribution to Coventry Irish-settlement is unclear, since it cannot always be distinguished from the census, if those in the Irish 'community' mentioned as pensioned had met their wives while in service or later. The journey of Thomas Black to Coventry, most likely drawn there by his Warwickshire wife, Susan, is shown in Table 3.4. He had been a widower and carpenter and on his remarriage, on April 16th 1849, he settled in Coventry.[32] The influence of a wife in ex-soldier location is shown in Table 3.5 which provides an instance where a Coventrian woman had given birth in Ireland, and who had prevailed on her Bristol-born husband, who had met her in Coventry, to return and settle in Coventry. Though their son William is included in totals as Irish-born, he would have had little sense of 'Irishness', illustrating the fault (as does Thomas Black) in the common presumption that all Irish-born belonged to an Irish ethnic community.[33] Again, the army connection may not be clear enough to assess, because a soldier after leaving the army may have described himself initially under his new occupation and only later reverted to 'pensioner' as a description. Table 3.6 shows that

[28] There was too, a reserve by army command about such barracks becoming involved with the community life of the towns in which they were located. That said, evidence from baptismal records show that newborns in the barracks, where appropriate, were brought to Hill Street for Catholic baptism.
[29] Jackson, *Irish in Britain*, p. 7
[30] Brown, Irish Railway Workers, p. 69
[31] The National Archives, Records, http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/results/r?_ps=60&_p=1800&_q=coventry+Irish Accessed 27th August 2016
[32] It is to be wondered what understanding of Irish identity those in the family related to Thomas possessed.
[33] The 1851 census provides two further examples of Irish-born children of English-born soldiers (living outside the Barracks).

in the census of 1851 there were 9 Chelsea pensioners among the 272 *Irish Households* heads. Age differences of up to twenty years may be noted between partners. Any female disinclination based on age difference may have been overcome by the realisation, in the environment of the time, that the pensioner had a reliable, if meagre source of income.

General increase in Irish movement to British urban centres

By the 1830s, according to MacRaild, emigration had become 'part of the Irish peoples' culture'. He pointed out that the Irish had a sufficient presence in Britain during the 1830s that they were believed deserving of their own separate report by Lewis, when an enquiry was being made into poverty in Ireland.[34] The migrants had been driven to leave an impaired Ireland by that very poverty and lack of opportunity; their passage facilitated by the increased adoption of the English language in Ireland. (Appendix 14).

Ó Tuathaigh said that in 1841 there were approximately 420,000 Irish-born in Britain with about 100,000 having arrived since 1831.[35] By 1841 there was a substantial settlement of 284,128 Irish-born in England alone which represented 1.89% of total population of 14,995,138. The regional distribution showed concentration in the South East, Midlands, North West and North East of England. Irish-born in the London counties (84,507), Liverpool (49,639) and Manchester (30,304) could claim 57.8% of this national total. Other regional cities such as Leeds (5,027), Birmingham (4,683) and with a similar figure Bristol (4,639) had significant Irish-born presence.[36] The reality was that while quantitatively noticeable in the large urban areas, the Irish were found throughout Britain. As exampled by the County of Warwick, they were not confined to Birmingham and Coventry. Figures for Warwickshire in 1841 (401,715 total pop) show 6,333 were born in Ireland. If the Irish-born in Birmingham and Coventry are withdrawn it is to be seen that 1,095 were residing in the remainder of the county. Hemlingford Hundred that almost surrounded Birmingham contained 350, while 524 were found in Knightlow Hundred that surrounded Coventry while Warwick Borough held 89 Irish-born.[37] Again in the census of 1851 Irish presence was to be found throughout the county (Table 3.7).[38]

---

[34] MacRaild, *Irish Migrants 1750-1922*, pp. 15, 41

[35] Gearoid Ó Tuathaigh, *Ireland Before the Famine 1798 – 1848*, (Dublin 2007) p. 125

[36] Enumeration Abstract 1841 PP 1843 XXII (496) pp. 98, 111, 139, 183, 313, 331, 397-399. The 1841 census does not provide Irish-born figures specifically for London. The numbers of Irish-born in the four counties in which London was located: Middlesex 58,068, Surrey 13,822, Kent 10,401, Essex 2,216.

[37] Enumeration Abstract 1841 PP 1843 XXII (496) p. 331

[38] This census provided data for Registration Districts which allowing greater local reveal at census Abstract level than for 1841.

Place of origin links and chain migration

Fitzpatrick emphasised the importance of chain migration in steering migrants towards particular locations.[39] T.M. Macdonald in 1836 referred to the Birmingham Irish as being chiefly from Mayo and Roscommon.[40] Chinn referred to the existence of chain migration in the same city and the 'powerful kinship bonds and common places of origin', especially from Connacht, found in dilapidated streets of Greens Village and Old Inkleys. He wrote that half of those in 1851 Birmingham who gave an Irish county birthplace came from Connacht: with Roscommon accounting for 24.0%. There was a significant and long-standing presence of Dubliners that amounted to 14.0%.[41] Herson noted that 40.0% of the Irish in Stafford came from Galway, Roscommon or Mayo based on his 1851-71 summation. He said that the 1851 census data suggested strong origination in Castlerea, Co. Roscommon which was not detectable in the census a decade earlier. He observed that the linkage with Castlerea, most likely established by accident in 1847, resulted in many more migrants making for Stafford through the chain process (Appendix 14).[42] Danaher's analysis of census data for the 1850s and particularly 1860s led him to conclude that 'there were three main areas in Ireland which decanted migrants to Leicester: Galway, Mayo and Roscommon'. Other important sources for in-migrants he noted were the south and east of Cork, Down and Dublin'.[43]

Table 5.16 provides details of origin available for Coventry. The tradition of silk weaving in both Dublin and Coventry perhaps accounts for the prominence of Dublin-born at mid-century. Similar to the findings for other cities, migrants from Mayo followed by Roscommon and Galway featured strongly in Coventry.[44] Being within the ambit of Liverpool where these west of Ireland migrants disembarked, it too received its share from this strongly donating province of Ireland,.

Place of origin links within Ireland, between migrants, cannot be systematically quantified but it is apparent that the numerical presence of some counties was of sufficient size that it was possible that chain migration could accelerate. Word may have gone out from Coventry to occupants of a particular county in Ireland, that in some of the streets of the city, there was sufficient fellow county residents, to offer

[39] Fitzpatrick, A peculiar tramping people, p. 636
[40] Report State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain, pp. 1-4
[41] Chinn, 'Sturdy Catholic emigrants', pp. 56, 63, 72
[42] Herson, A small-town perspective, p. 89
[43] Danaher, Irish in Leicester, p. 56
[44] Other studies: Murphy noted that of 192 Irish migrants in Nottingham who provided county of birth detail in 1851, 36.0% were from Dublin, with 22.0% from Sligo and 14.0% from Mayo (Murphy, Irish in Nottingham, p. 88). Dillon noted of the 417 in Leeds in 1851, 26.0% were from Dublin, while those born in Mayo and Tipperary were each ranked next with 8.7% (Dillon, Irish in Leeds, p. 6).

companionship to new arrivals from the same county. However as Herson reminds such kin attraction may have been limited if the prospect of obtaining employment locally was poor.[45]

The chain migration process assumes a member of a household in Ireland who has moved to Coventry will facilitate other adult members in the household to join the member. This process cannot be systematically measured from census data. The telling link, of sibling or other kin, is only stated in the census in relation to the head of the household in which the migrant resides. Though separate households had members, with different surnames but who were in some way or other related to each other, the 'wall' between separate households prevents the exposition of kinship links in the search for chain migration. Same surnamed siblings who lived apart, even as close as next door to each other, are seen as constituting separate households, and their blood relationship is not conveyed. Indeed in cases, folk similarly surnamed to the household head, unhelpfully expressed their relationship not in consanguineal terms but simply as 'lodger'.[46] On the basis that the majority of migrants were according to Swift 'young single and disproportionately male' - though not necessarily so in times of influx - evidence of 'hidden' chain migration in enumeration books is mainly to be found in the assemblage of individuals close in age and with similar surnames, and particularly if the surname is distinctive, suggesting kinship, through which the process operated.[47] The phenomenon is more detectable through surnames borne by males and is more easily recognised when similar surnamed households are found living in close proximity in a courtyard or street. However, since it will also, only best reveal its presence at a time of influx when migrant reception areas are temporarily swollen, chaining may be too readily associated merely with the profile of those in 'clustered' situations during migrant incursions. Again, the arrival pattern may not make for easy distinguishment of chaining. The commonly understood procedure of a sequential younger sibling following an older sibling may have been supplanted by a number of adult siblings, or a family moving ensemble, such as the Gahagan/Galligan/Gallagon family circa 1850 (Table 3.8). Table 3.9 furnishes some examples of apparent chaining.[48]

---

[45] Herson, A small-town perspective, p. 89

[46] Differently named lodgers may have been related to other lodgers, but that fact, subsumed under the word 'lodger', is not on display.

[47] Roger Swift, Behaving Badly? Irish Migrants and Crime in the Victorian City, in Judith Rowbotham and Kim Stevenson (eds.), *Criminal Conversations: Victorian Crimes, Social Panic and Moral Outrage* (Columbus 2005) p. 106

[48] A further example may be afforded by John Lamb who was a 60 years old silk weaver from Ireland residing in Coventry with his family in 1851. He was still present in 1861 but an Irish-born 50 years old, ribbon weaver James Lamb and family that had resided in Congleton, had also by then come to live in Coventry. The distinctive Lamb surname is key to exposing a possible pulling force by one brother on the

Irish involvement in the silk trade

Coventry had an historical link as early as the eighteen century with Dublin from where weavers or apprentices originated.[49] It is a link that may have endured and ensured a less frosty reception for nineteenth century incomers. Just as they had done so in Spitalfields, the Huguenots had developed silk manufacture in Dublin. At the beginning of the 19th century there were 900 weavers in the Liberties of Dublin. Following the Act of Union in 1801 and the movement of parliamentary representation to London there was a fall off in demand from aristocratic, fashionable society for silks, ribbons, curtains and coach trim. During the Napoleonic Wars the silk weavers endured severe hardship as it was difficult to source raw material. The industry collapsed in 1826 due both to the abolition of tariffs on imported silk product and the reduction in its shipping costs permitted by steam powered ships. This left 600 looms inactive and three quarters of the ribbon weavers out of work. The desperation was recorded in Dublin newspapers.[50]

---

other. HO107/2067.630.17 ED 31; RG9/2209.69.26 ED 25; HO107/2167.508.46 ED 6l; RG9/2208.49.18 ED 17

[49] The following as then written were the names, and details of such people in 1740 seeking poor relief in Coventry, and show Irish engagement with the city in the mid-eighteen century as journeyman weavers.

> John Clear: Weaver about 32 years of age: he was born in St. James' Street in the City of Dublin: he hath been in the City for 17 years: works for John Gibbons.
> Samuel Rylance: Weaver aged 21. Born at Clonmell, Tipperary in Ireland: served 5 years of his time: his master, Daniel Stanton, came to settle at Coventry and about 6 months ago his master sent for him to come over and he came and worked with Martha Underhay.
> Daniel Stanton: Weaver 49. Born at Clonmell, Tipperary: served his time in St. Luke's parish, Dublin: came to Coventry 4 years ago last Easter: works for Mr. John Lawkes.
> Daniel Ripley: Weaver aged 29. Born in St. Luke's Parish, Dublin, where he served his apprenticeship: has been in this city for about 12 months: works for Thomas Walker in Welstreet: has a wife but she is in Ireland.
> John Haylock: Ribbon weaver aged 40. Born in Stephen Street, Dublin in St. Bride's parish where he served his apprenticeship and then came to this City where he continued to work as a journeyman until now. He has one child, Ann, about a quarter of a year old, by Mary, his wife who is Irish.

The list, apart from showing the variety of less obvious patronymics linked to Ireland, displays chain migration based on occupation and town of origin. Daniel Stanton from Clonmel 'sent' for Samuel Rylance also from Clonmel. Wives chosen were also Irish although Ripley's wife had not joined him. (Coventry Archives, *People to Coventry, Migration and settlement from Early Times*, (Coventry 1996) pp. 14, 15).

[50] The *Saunder's News-Letter* 8th April 1826 under the headline 'Distress of the Dublin Weavers' reported: '…Many weavers with seven, eight, and ten children each, are doomed to witness the agony of their wretched, starving, and almost houseless wives and children; …Yesterday many of these poor creatures, amounting in number to about 300, walked in procession from the Coombe…This sorrowful procession moved slowly…'; *Dublin Morning Register* 12th January 1830 published a letter which contained the view that: 'Were it not for the exertions of the relief committee, and the generous subscribers, a single day would not pass without numbers of industrious persons being found dead in the streets'.

Magee furnishes details of two files lodged in the National Archives, Dublin giving details of relief work and assistance provided to weavers and their families during the slump of 1826. Magee furnished the names 1900 males who involved in the rag trade in 1826 who worked repairing roads in order to obtain relief. Eight possibly 10 had almost similar names to those mentioned in Coventry. The second file provided details of relief provided to weaving families and 9 possibly 12 had similar names to those in Coventry. The exciting promise of a large-scale finding of families in Dublin who matched weaving

The Mansion-House Relief Committee, under the auspices of the Lord Mayor, through public subscription assisted a number of weavers to emigrate.[51] The *Dublin Morning Register* 8th April 1830 stated that £9.19s. was disbursed to aid the 'Passage and subsistence of twelve destitute silk, cotton, and woollen weavers, and their destitute families, having promise of employment at Coventry, Manchester and Leeds'. However travelling to Coventry was not a move to Arcadia for Irish weavers as in January 1830 and noted in Chapter 2 there were reports of much distress in the city, with 'persons in respectable ranks of life, who themselves have been in the habit of contributing to the poor, not only find themselves unable to continue such contributions, but are, in many instances, actually obliged to apply for relief themselves.'[52]

In 1838 Joseph Fletcher an Assistant Commissioner reporting on hand-loom weaving in Coventry wrote:

> When the ribbon trade of Dublin succumbed under English competition about twelve years ago, several hundred Irish came to Coventry and its vicinity, and have ever since been employed in the trade; some being very good hands and others indifferent. They were not particularly liked by the masters, and at first were regarded with jealousy by the men; but this feeling is now forgotten, and there have been no further immigrations of late years…The manufacturers have at different periods said that the supply of labourers was much beyond the demand of labour'.[53]

Coventry would have attracted Dublin weavers as the domestic system was still important in the city and because Macclesfield, originally nearer at hand to Dublin,

---

families in the Coventry 1841 census was not entirely fulfilled. This was due to the gap of fifteen years, the restriction of the first list to males, who if they migrated may have brought a family but its members' presence cannot be confirmed, or simply because Dublin weavers in Coventry in 1841 had not sought relief in 1826. (Sean Magee, *Weavers and Related Trades, Dublin 1826*, (Dun Laoghaire 1995)).

[51] Kathleen Breathnach, The last of the Dublin silk weavers, *Irish Arts Review*, 1990 pp. 134-143; Report on the Silk Trade, pp. 837-839

[52] *Dublin Evening Post* 21st January 1830

[53] Report on Hand-Loom Weavers, p. 53. The accuracy of Joseph Fletcher's remark that 'several hundred Irish came to Coventry and its vicinity' cannot be checked and it would also be unwise to over depend on one reference. His words intrigue; while they leave the valued impression of what then was thought of the scale of Irish movement to Coventry, the word 'several' lacks a longed-for precision. It most likely included members of the weavers' families. An asterisk in Fletcher's report where his remark is made, is footnoted as 'Cope, Ratliff, Caldicott'. Cleophas Ratliff (1839), Richard Caldicott (1847) and Thomas Cope (1848) were mayors of Coventry in the years bracketed and were also ribbon manufacturers. It is suggested they would have an understanding of local employment conditions and knowledge of town developments that would plausibly support what they reported to Fletcher. These 'hundreds' of Irish would have arrived without looms (as indicated by Brocklehurst above) and so if male, and intent on silk working, would have worked as journeymen's journeymen, i.e. second journeymen. The increase, observed in the 1820s would correspond to the sharp but unsustained increase, which was noted by Edward Peach in Birmingham.[53] It is possible that the 'several hundred Irish' that Fletcher left an impression of being composed of weavers (and must surely have included their families), motivated to migrate through unemployment, were not all such, but actually represented the 1820s increase in general immigration noted in Britain that was caused by dismal conditions over much of Ireland.

increasingly seemed without opportunity.[54] Coventry may have attracted Irish-weavers who initially settled in Macclesfield or in Lancashire. Redford referred to the 'persistent distress' of handloom weavers from 1836 and noted that it related to Irish weavers, who, used to a lower living standard continued to survive in Lancashire, when local weavers had quit.[55] The exemplar families in Table 3.10 illustrate the Congleton, Derby, Coventry trail, the length of time (by ages of children) it might have taken to eventually reach Coventry, and that Coventry was seldom the first option.

The population of Coventry Registration District increased by 9,584 (45.0%) in the twenty years from 1821 and this general inward movement may have masked the visible increase of Irish in the city; thus lessening possible acrimony if such an Irish increase was glaring.[56] The prevalence of lanes and courts with a single entry may have served to make the extent of Irish numbers less obvious. It would appear the reason why few Irish were observed arriving en-masse after 1826-30 was because there was little employment opportunity to attract less than desperate work seekers, due to an oversupply of labour resulting from local in-migration from the surrounding villages. Fletcher's direct reference to the Irish is disappointingly the only one available, to inform how the Irish interacted with the staple trade of the city. It does predictably reveal that the Irish were initially disliked but had over the years become tolerated and employed. They had arrived prior to the occurrence of a more distinct distancing in factory-master and employee relations in Coventry; thus there is no evidence to show that they were seen or used as strike breakers.[57] A further point is that some of these

---

[54] In 1832 John Brocklehurst stated that the Irish poor [weavers] in Macclesfield were in great distress over the winter of 1831-32 and had not recourse to the parish. He remarked that in 1830, and in the year before, and previously the silk trade was in a miserable state in Macclesfield. He continued:

> 'a portion of the [Dublin] weavers who came over at the time (bringing with them their scanty all, consisting of an old loom) … never succeeded in obtaining any direct employment; but raised a few shillings on this moveable, perhaps the value of it as old timber, and since that time they have occasionally obtained a short job as journeymen; in too many sad instances living huddled six or eight together in a small room or cellar, without furniture or a bed, their wives and children obliged to subsist on charity.' (Report on the Silk Trade, p. 792).

[55] Redford, *Labour Migration*, p. 112

[56] Census of England & Wales 1851, PP 1852-53 LXXXV Population Tables Vol. 1 p. 82

[57] The only other locatable reference to this incursion was in the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 21st March 1914 where in its 'Topics of the Week' columns the following piece featured. 'I wonder how many persons in Coventry were present at the local festivities in connection with the Coronation of Queen Victoria on June 28, 1838. An old and respected citizen with whom I was chatting the other evening was there - and he does not remember much of what occurred, for the simple reason that he was at the time but six weeks old…Talking of "long ago" my friend was reminiscent of very old times. His parents came over from Ireland, as he put it, when the effects of the Union were beginning to be felt; and he added that he could count fifty families now in the city who settled here about the same time. Legislation had most adversely influenced the weaving industries in the "ould counthry," with the result that many Irish weavers made their way to Manchester, Congleton, Coventry and other places, where employment to which they were accustomed was to be found. That they were favoured here is clear from the remark of one of the employers, who, on some of his workpeople complaining to him, when work grew slack, that the Irishmen were first considered, said he thought he was right in doing so, as he had got his share of the

weavers may have been Protestant which may have eased their introduction to the host population. Thomas Elston a weaver from Ireland was married to Emma Kimberley from Banbury in St. Michaels in 1836.[58]

In the presence of Warwickshire surplus labour it can be inferred a continuous stream of fresh Irish migrants would not have been welcomed. There appears to be an absence until the late 1840s of further en-bloc in-migration and this allowed time for accord to develop. Generous outdoor relief which was a feature of Coventry, and which continued until the late 1820s may have lessened a sense of hardship among the population. Without that assistance, blame may have been placed more directly on the Irish presence for local unemployment and misery. The silk trade was cyclic and it is not clear if Irish entry to Coventry was facilitated by a period of expansion in Coventry. The year 1826 had been one of much distress for the silk districts of Britain as it had been for Dublin; the distress had not abated by 1830.[59] The Irish may have arrived in a period of downturn but sustained by hope of better times in the future may have relativised the situation, that while it was a struggle in Coventry, conditions were not much better elsewhere. Irish families came with a particular skill in silk weaving that found an opening for its exercise in Coventry and very few other towns besides, so there was a strong incentive to settle down no matter at what point on the economic cycle the city found itself.

The dominance of weaving and associated activities in 1841 among the household heads of *Irish Households* may be seen in Table 3.11. It is to be regretted that so many people, in all censuses merely stated 'weaver' as their occupation, without further specifying whether they were hand-loom or power-loom operatives, but it may be assumed that male arrivals up to the 1840s acted as hand-loom journeymen. Females found work in the subsidiary areas of filling, winding, or warping. Outside the domestic

---

Irish trade of which their old masters had been deprived!' It is to be noticed that his interlocutor was a 'respected citizen'. Might it have been William McGowran born in 1838 ? (Appendix 2).

[58] Warwickshire Anglican Registers, Roll: Engl/2/1030 Year 1836 p. 176 (527). Caution must be exercised in assuming that marriage in an Anglican church meant the couple were Protestant, as it was a legal requirement to marry in the Church of England until 1837. There is no reference to their marriage, or to the baptism of Mary their daughter in Catholic registers.

[59] The *Herald* 13th January 1826 sympathised to hear that:

> 'the alarm in the Silk trade is still excessive. The applications for relief from the poor rates, this week were extraordinarily numerous; and we are informed that at the present moment 3,000 persons are out of employ in this City alone... Accounts from other Silk Districts are equally distressing. In the neighbourhood of Congleton, three individuals connected with the Trade have, in consequence of its depression, committed suicide'.

The *Dublin Evening Post* 21st January 1830 reported 'the state of the artisans and other labourers in that city [Coventry] as most deplorable. The poor rates and the number of paupers are fearfully on the increase…the inhabitants of this once opulent city will be involved in one common ruin…Persons in respectable ranks of life, who themselves have been in the habit of contributing to the poor, but are, in many instances actually obliged to apply for relief themselves'.

system females were in place to take up employment in the new steam powered factories which were taking hold from 1840. The 'children', both Irish-born and Non-Irish-born in these *Irish Households* were also much involved in the silk trade. Again in *English Households containing Irish* both Irish males and females were prominently involved in the silk trade.

Labouring Opportunities

According to Prest weaving was not a healthy activity. Moisture content of silk increased if left in the open air and smoke damaged it so weavers had to work indoors in unventilated spaces, and without a fire in winter. Being cramped against a loom from an early age, it was believed, led to their small stature, stooped demeanour, poor muscle development and pale appearance.[60] They did not turn their hands to activity beyond weaving as they had to preserve a fineness of touch to handle the silk thread. The same tactile sensitivity was required of watchmakers. In the light of these local traditions, work that called for able-bodied labourers might as a result have been available to the Irish. The network of Irish kin and of those originating from the same Irish parishes may have assisted in the finding of employment for Irish on building schemes. The hand-weaving and watch trades limited numbers, by restricting entry through apprenticeship (with its seven years of serving time and a reduced wage for the duration). This meant it was not an appealing option to young migrants from rural Ireland who necessarily had to turn to labouring to gain immediate and sufficient income. Their ability to earn may have been hampered by the seasonality of labouring work, and perhaps an excess of available workers kept wages low. However the long lay-offs and strikes that affected the weaving trade, the cyclic pattern of the industry, the indoor nature of weaving, together with the commitment and attention to fine detail required of weavers made weaving appear an activity suited to older people and an unlikely option for them.

Market town dealing and hawking activity

Hawking, street-selling and costermongering were common activities in British towns in the nineteenth century.[61] This form of selling, that also involved dealing in old clothes and in scrap, was popular among the Irish. Little capital outlay was involved, while the meagre, unreliable income from such activity could be tolerated by Irish who were familiar with the rigour of hand-to-mouth living. A dealer's barrow or cart may have provided some income if hired by frequently moving tenants to transport their belongings. Regarded as low on the social scale, they were not too proud to handle

[60] Prest, Industrial Revolution in Coventry, pp. 75,76

[61] Victorian Occupation Index, Hawker http://victorianoccupations.co.uk/h/h-is-for-hawker/ Accessed 12th October 2018

materials that others may have regarded as rank waste, or not so affluent they could afford to dismiss as not worthwhile the extraction of any residual value in used goods or materials. There can be little doubt that the search for firewood to sell, resulted in July 1874, in Bridget Sheridan a 45 year old, widowed, Irish-born hawker, with 42 year old Cork-born hawker James Davis and Mary Ann Davis being charged with damaging a countryside fence in Stivichal.[62] Denvir observed that dealing was an Irish intergenerational phenomenon. Apart from having acquired the art of selling through such a traditional manner, perhaps an innate Irish love of bargaining made them participate in dealing. Denvir told how Irish people could become involved at little cost and how they saw in the activity a pathway to advance.[63] Even so, Fielding saw in such activity the mark of poverty rather than enterprise; in later years some clothes dealers and shopkeepers were to him little more that permanent street traders although some did become part of a solid shopkeeping class.[64]

A total of 9 Irish-born hawkers in 1841 had risen to 24 by 1851. Goodman observed that until the 1860s and the invention of the sewing machine which allowed ready-made clothes to become widely available, working people made extensive use of second-hand clothes.[65] The abounding poverty in the Coventry of the 1860s may have sustained a market for second-hand clothes. In 1840 John Bracken (Appendix 2) was noted for keeping an old clothes shop in Greyfriars Lane. He described himself in the 1841 census as a broker, so did John Galaor and Patrick Cunnigan (Cunningham) in the same lane.[66] It was said of the adjoining Warwick Lane in 1862 that it was 'a miserable street of rag shops, old clothes shops, boot and shoe shops, and of low, antique houses, neglected and tumbling down'.[67] Living with her children at 66 Warwick Lane, was Peter Burke's Irish-born widow, Bridget Burke, 45 years, who was described as a dealer in old clothes (Table 3.2). The Irish may not have come to Coventry intent on dealing but may have pursued it on becoming familiar with the city after a few years residence.

---

[62] RG10/3176.16.1 ED 13; RG10/3176.158.24 ED 22 Meriden-born Mary Ann Davis in newspaper report was called Thompson and a lodger of James in Census; *Coventry Standard* 3rd July 1874

[63] 'An Irish harvestman or labourer finds himself in one of the small English or Scottish towns, and he tries his luck at dealing – a few pence or shillings at the outside, often constituting his only capital. He becomes a collector of rags, old ropes, bones, old metal, rabbit and hare skins, and other apparently waste materials, for which trade has its uses… By dint of pinching and screwing he is able to leave the hawking to others, and to set up what is termed a "marine store." (Denvir, *Irish in Britain*, pp. 453, 454).

[64] Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, pp. 31, 32

[65] Ruth Goodman, *How to be a Victorian*, (London 2014) p. 48

[66] *Coventry Herald* 12th August 1842 referred to Thompson (most likely Charles who was a hawker in Cow Lane in 1841) as an Irishman from the neighbourhood of rag-fair, in Greyfriars lane who was committed, for want of sureties to keep the peace.

[67] *Coventry Herald* 16th May 1862

The changing description of this form of selling is seen in the case of Michael Harvey who was a hawker in 1871, a general dealer in 1881 and a marine store dealer in 1891.[68]

Mention might also be made of factors that possibly repelled settlement up to 1860. The positioning of Coventry on a Liverpool to London route axis may have induced migrants to see Coventry as a mere staging post on the journey to their ultimate destination in the capital. The Trent valley line that opened in late 1847 allowed rail traffic from Liverpool, and later Holyhead, destined for London to avoid Coventry, using the pass route from Stafford to Rugby.[69] Migrants may have passed at speed to the north east of Coventry on this rail line largely unaware of its presence. Mulkern took the view that weaving and watchmaking activity was so dominant it kept the market for casual labour low thereby holding down migrant numbers.[70] Perhaps other locations such as Birmingham with its enormous workshop type industrialization, where there was a prospect of finding employment together with strong communal identification and support, appeared simply more promising. After 1860 Coventry's depressed state for many years would also have lessened its appeal to migrants depending on casual employment.

3.2 Perception of the Irish poor

Apart from references by Inspector Vice to Irish overcrowding (Appendix 4) at mid-century, there are few direct accounts of the Irish in their living conditions in Coventry.[71] In his 1843 outline for the State of large Towns Inquiry, J.R. Martin noted

---

[68] RG10.3179.35.2 ED 3; RG11/3067.30.18 ED 11; RG12.2453.30.5 ED 7; The *Herald* 29th November 1867 reported that on the opening of the New Market Hall, stalls or standings would not be allowed elsewhere. By January 1868 strict enforcement had almost ended hawking as a practice. (*Coventry Standard* 4th January 1868). The *Herald* 28th April 1871 reported that Mary O'Neil was charged with hawking without a certificate which was a requirement from 1870; on her promising not to offend again she was discharged. Mary and her husband William were from Tyrone; the latter was described as a Church of England Butcher in 1851. Though they had arrived by 1851 it was not until 1861 (See Table 3.15), that Mary was described as a hawker which continued to occupy her in 1871 at 39 years of age. William, now 41 years, was noted as a labourer. Over the years they reared five children and had moved from Leicester Street to 5 Caldicotts Yard to a Room over H3C9 Greyfriars Lane. There was no reference in court to her Irish background. The *Times* 21st May 1879 reported that Ellen Cronin, of Well Street, was before the court for hawking without a licence. In 1871 she was described as a 32 year old charwoman, living with her, also Irish-born, was husband John, a 33 year old gimp spinner. In 1881 she lived as a charwoman in H1C1 Spon End with her husband John who was now a general labourer. In both censuses she was referred to as a charwoman, which cautions that the occupation provided at census-time may not be factual or may not indicate the extent of the activities engaged in. RG10/3179.70.34 ED 4; RG11/3070.56.18 ED 34

[69] Robin Jones, *West Coast*, (Horncastle 2012) p. 39

[70] Mulkern, Irish and Public Disorder in Coventry, p. 121

[71] It is worth adverting to the evidence taken in January 1834 relating to the condition of the Irish poor in nearby Birmingham. It reveals an addiction to lodging-houses and to overcrowding which was present over a decade before the Famine influx. It was a residential practice that was, not as is often thought, necessarily due to destitution but a lifestyle choice. Any wider application of Birmingham conclusions must be treated with care, since they were – though not unsympathetic, a product of the outlook of the time and because the Irish were 'a distinct community' and relatively more embedded in Birmingham. These comments on Birmingham Irish are quoted in Appendix 8.

the most deficient areas of Coventry, but did not mention Irish (Chapter 2). Neither was there direct mention by William Ranger of Irish in his 1849 report on the sanitary condition of Coventry also referenced in Chapter 2. However his 'wanting' streets e.g. Palmer Lane, Well Street, and West Orchard all featured as areas where the Irish were enumerated in significant numbers in the census of 1851.[72] The opportunity in these reports to single out the Coventry Irish and associate these migrants to deprived conditions was not taken, nor was a quarter, court or street ever referred to as 'Irish'. It suggests the poorer Coventry Irish were not perceived as singularly different from the countrywide view of Irish migrants, or that they were especially different or separate from the poor among whom they resided. While some families stood out as 'low' Irish, other families were so similar in form and experience to host families that only the census would reveal an Irish dimension. A weaver, John Hewson, came before the court with a number of other debt defaulters in August 1848. He had reneged on a former arrangement to repay a tailor called Brown. He stated he was unable to pay from 'want of employment and illness'. He agreed that he had a son, wife and daughter earning 15s. per week on average, but he had eight children to care for. This was surely Irish-born John Hewson who was recorded living in Well Street with his wife and eight local-born children all in the census of 1841.[73]

3.3 Reputation and settlement at mid-century

The causes and course of the Famine which occurred in the later 1840s have been widely recounted and need not be recalled here. It led to an influx of Irish with the census of 1851 recording approximately 520,000 Irish-born residents in Britain; a figure that represented a 78.7% increase on the 291,000 recorded a decade earlier. Those figures cannot portray the desperation, which had to an extent lessened by 1851, but they do reveal the impact. This was keenly felt in cities where there was already an Irish footprint in 1841, but also experienced in most other urban areas which saw a rise in their Irish-born numbers.[74]

The pre-Famine Irish who were accommodating themselves to their urban circumstances, may have found the streets in which they lived re-stamped as Irish areas. They may have been noticed anew as Irish, and simply because of common-origin in Ireland faced criticism over Irish anti-social behaviour even though it was caused by recent migrants. Critics were given cause to complain by the antics of some newcomers

[72] *Coventry Standard* 29th June 1849
[73] *Coventry Herald* 18th August 1848; HO107/1153/2.36.27 ED 4. John or Ellen could not be traced after 1841.
[74] See Frank Neal, *Black '47: Britain and the Famine Irish*, (Houndmills Basingstoke 1998)

who had brought with them to their poor surroundings, a traditional rural life-style that only fellow newcomers thought apt. The criticism was sharpened by what MacRaild referred to as a 'specific anti-Irish dimension' that 'reared its head in response to epic migrations from the neighbouring island.'[75]

The immediate Famine impact on Coventry was most felt in the Workhouse and the arrangements it made are outlined in Appendix 7. There appeared to have been no city-wide alarm over the presence there in 1847 of 'Irish fever' [typhus], or that 3 attendants had died as a result of it, or a sense of crisis that the Workhouse was totally overwhelmed. It is worth recalling that Chapter 2 described how at this point in time many silk operatives in the city were also in the throes of poverty. The following report indicated the post-Famine tone in the *Herald* in July 1849. It would have locally reinforced the seasoned national stereotype, which on occasions was restricted to the 'low Irish', but without much rumination was applied to Irish one-and all. Usually newspaper reports featured the 'Irish row' where the Irish settled scores with each other. However this report described the Irish attacking an innocent local who tried to walk away. It assumed anti-social attitudes and a lawless outlook were part of the Irish national character and it contained the classic ingredients: multiple references to 'Irish', alcohol fuelled violence and disorder, 'hordes', 'filling the street' 'frequent disturbances', overcrowding, with a final flourish on begging. The quick fiery Irish temper is given contrast by an official John Vice, who had a calm, reasoned English stance.

> 'Owen Grogan, Michael Burke, and a stout lad named Thomas Grogan, all Irish were charged with committing a violent assault upon a young man named Mansill…[A row broke out in the Barley Mow public house, Leicester Street] … Michael Burke struck his fist upon the table, and commenced a loud uproar of abuse. Seeing that a storm was brewing, [Mansill] rose to leave the room saying he had no mind to stay there in such a noise. This was the signal for a general attack [Mansill] had the greatest difficulty to fight his way out of the [public] house, and when in the street, was knocked down and sadly mutilated…A witness named Dodd, who happened to be passing near the spot, identified the boy Grogan, as the person who struck the complainant a severe blow on the head with a candlestick. The scene of the disturbance was described by the police as most disgraceful, whole hordes of disorderly Irish filling the streets about that part of town. Inspector Vice said disturbances were frequent in the neighbourhood, and no wonder, as he had been informed by a gentleman near the spot, that no less than 90 persons, mostly Irish were living in small houses at the back of Dog-Lane

[75] Donald MacRaild, Transnationalising 'Anti-Popery': Militant Protestant Preachers in the Nineteenth-Century Anglo-World, in *Journal of Religious History*, Vol. 39, No. 2 June 2015 p. 224

> [also called Leicester Street]…the boy Grogan is a fat-faced Irish lad, and is in the habit of begging.'[76]

The defendants were fined so the incident was not regarded by the magistrates as too serious. Of all, the presence of a 'horde' of 'no less than 90' may have been the point of most concern to the reader who may have been worried about the scale of the recent 'influx'. How the 'gentleman near the spot' could have counted a rather specific 90 persons and no less, and not ventured a more common response of 'around 100' remains curious.[77]

The damage this type of reportage did to the image of the local Irish has to be acknowledged.[78] Mulkern remarked, a small number of families that settled in Coventry post-Famine 'would prove to be a great source of disorder in the coming decades' He isolated four: the Gahagan (spelled in a variety of ways), Grogan, Harrity and Harvey families. Their exploits are recorded in Appendix 4.[79]

Finnegan could similarly say of York, that a small number of individuals in the Irish concentration in Long Close Lane, through their behaviour created notoriety for lawlessness in the area that damaged the reputation of the Irish.[80]

In reality the incident was not exceptional for Leicester Street. The *Herald* 2nd September 1842 reported a recent session of the magistrates had largely engaged in

---

[76] *Coventry Herald* 6th July correct 1849. The 1851 census showed Owen Grogan as a married 26 year old Irish labourer and Thomas Grogan as an 18 year old Irish hawker. Michael Burke was not found.

[77] A few months later the *Herald* could write again using a lurid epithet and the word 'ferocious' adjectivally and adverbially to tell of violence and on this occasion a consequent assault to a policeman:

> 'Hannah Grogan, a young Irishwoman, belonging to the filthy swarm herding together in a small house or two up a yard in Leicester street, was brought up, charged with being concerned in a ferocious assault upon Police Constable Iliffe in the execution of his duty'.

It was said Iliffe in an effort to quell a violent row amongst them about two o'clock last Friday morning was pounced upon ferociously and received many severe wounds and bruises about the head. Hannah promised to leave the town. In November 1850 James Harvey who had assaulted a policeman was described as one of a gang infesting the Street. (*Coventry Herald* 19th April 1850 and 15th November 1850)

[78] Irish violence was not specifically a post-Famine phenomenon or found always in a throng. In September 1841 Joseph Hewson, referred to by the *Herald* as an 'Irish tailor' residing in Greyfriars Lane was ordered to find bail and keep the peace for six months having been charged with violently assaulting his wife. The paper had then again brought together in the common mind 'violent assault' and the 'Irish' through its gratuitous and common practice of mentioning the nationality of the accused. (*Coventry Herald* 3rd September 1841). While four male Hewsons of Irish background were found in the census of 1841 none were tailors or lived in Greyfriars Lane. It is difficult to know if such labelling was simply of its time as immediately above the account of Joseph appeared the following 'Mary Rowlett, a terrible shrew, was called on to find bail of £10, to keep the peace towards her husband for three months.'

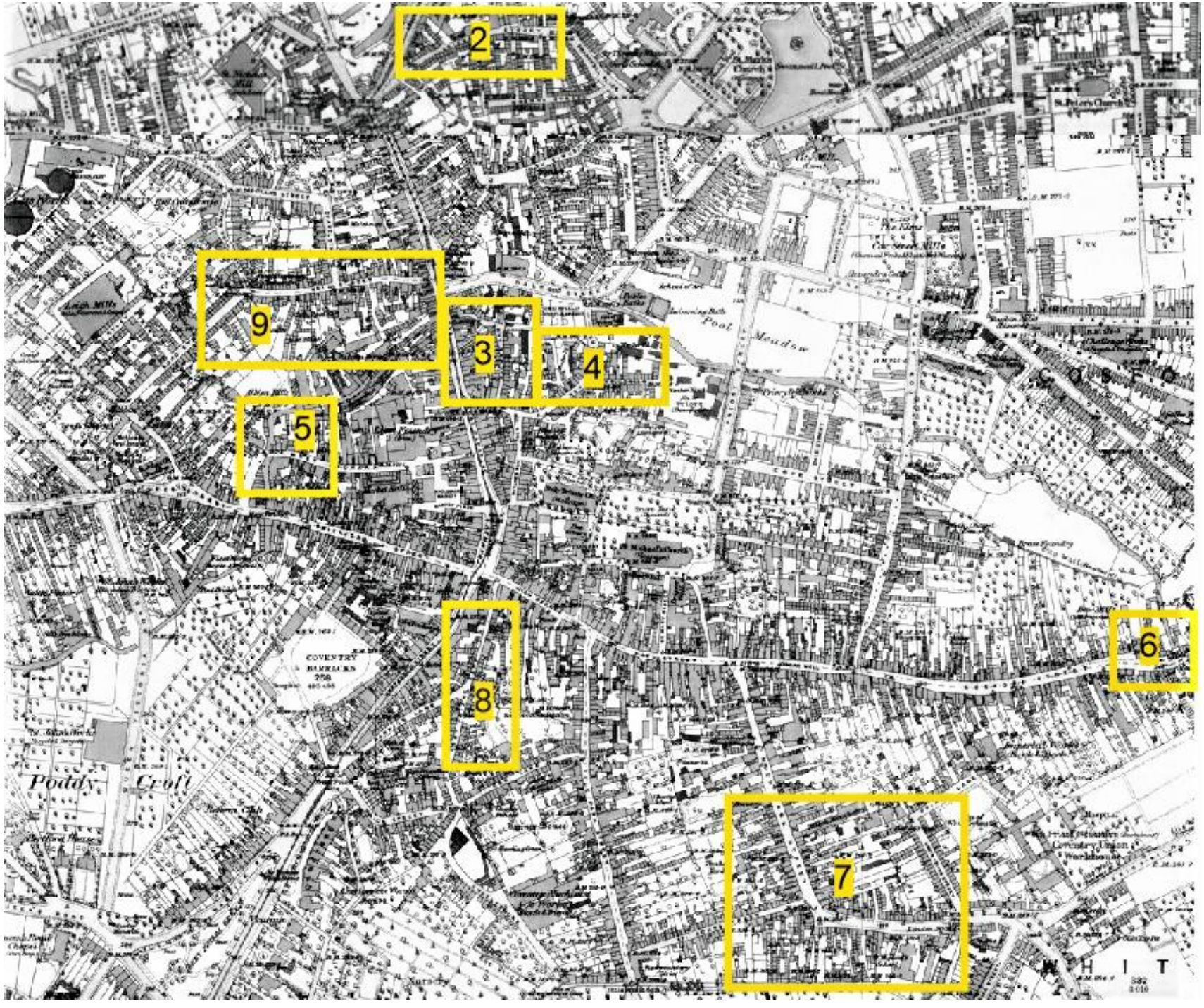
[79] A look at the background of the troublemakers in the Barley Mow is pertinent. Owen Grogan in 1851 was a 26 year old, married Irish labourer living in Fleet Street who had two lodgers with a surname to be noticed, Richard and Thomas Gahigan, both Irish hawkers. Owen's drunken, thuggish behaviour would constantly reverberate down the years. Thomas Grogan was an Irish hawker lodging with Michael Grogan an Irish labourer in 8 Malt House Yard, Well Street. At No 6 in the same yard lived married Irish labourer Patrick Bourke. It may be seen that, already through residential arrangements, lasting friendships were made and fostered; the Yard would also be known as Court 8 which would sustain many Irish over the decades…

[80] Finnegan, *Irish in York*, pp. 58-61

hearing complaints of neighbours in dispute with fellow neighbours with ‘the most notorious parties being from Dog-Lane (Leicester Street), where repeated rows have of late been occurring’. The *Herald* reported 16th August 1850 Michael McKeogh, ‘a prominent

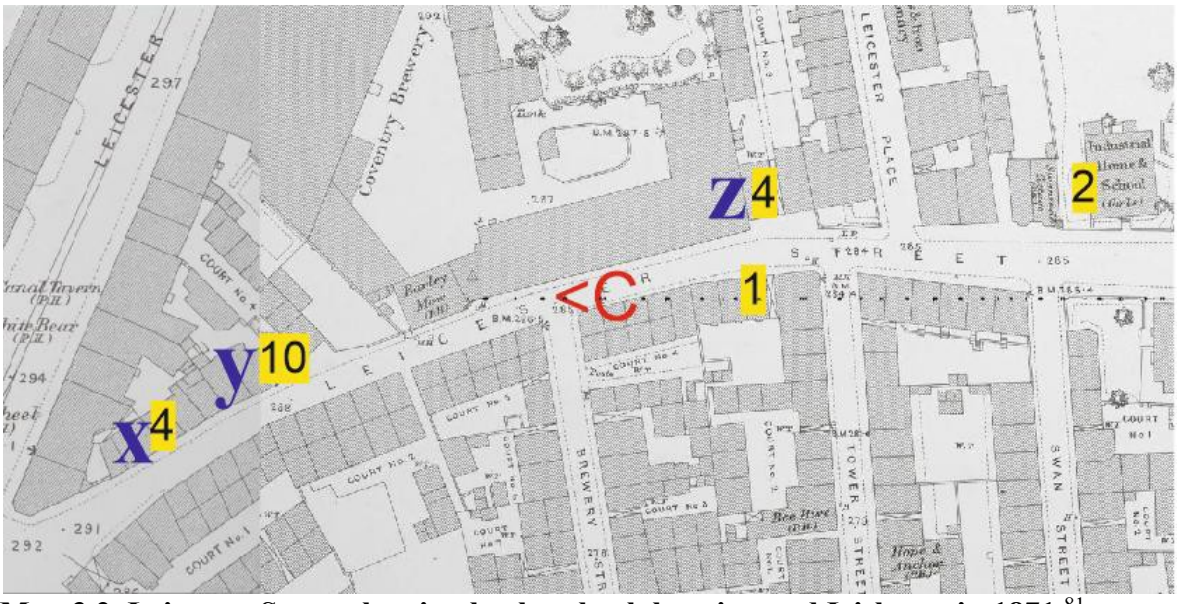
Map 3.1
Locations of Vicinity Maps

Map 3. --
2. Leicester Street,
3. Palmer Lane,
4. New Buildings,
5. West Orchard,
6. Gosford Street,
7. Much Park Street,
8. Greyfriars Lane,
9. Well Street.



Underlying map
© British Library

Figure 3.1 Part of Leicester Street circa 1926 looking west, featuring back to back housing on the unpaved left and Barley Mow pub with gas lamp on right. 'C' on Map 3.2 marks the position of the camera.



Map 3.2. Leicester Street showing back to back housing and Irishcom in 1871.[81]

member of the notorious garrison of low Irish, about 40 or 50 of whom are crowded in a tenement or two in Leicester-street, was charged with gross disorderly conduct, between

[81] Underlying Map © British Library

one and two o'clock on Sunday morning'.[82] Leicester Street had a dubious reputation into the 1880s. The Chief Superintendent of Police was quoted as saying in the *Herald* 15th October 1880 that the street 'was becoming so bad that it was scarcely possible for an officer to attempt an arrest there without being assaulted'. His remarks arose in the case of William Ludford who was sent to gaol with hard labour for three months for assaulting a police officer.[83]

Map 3.2 shows the distribution of Irish households in Leicester Street in 1871. Their 'Coventrisation' in terms of the number of local-born children and inter-marriage was apparent by 1871. At No 50 Leicester Street (Marked 'X') resided Job Mander, 30 years, a bricklayer from Marton and Sarah his Dublin-born wife, 20 years, and their two young Coventry–born children. At No 54 (Marked 'Y') Thomas Lynes aged 35, a labourer from Mayo resided with his Roscommon-born wife aged 32 and their eight children ranging in age from 13 years to 1 year, all born in Coventry.[84] The Irishcom at No 59 (Marked 'Z') were Irish-born Sarah Smith, a 61 year old, former servant living with her step-son Charles Smith, a 43 year old Coventrian weaver, who was head of a household of 4. This household containing Sarah was the only one with Irishcom in the street in 1881.[85] Although it was very central and had early Irish notoriety, Leicester Street may have come to be seen by the Irish who liked to live in streets close to the city core, as too far away at the 'edge' of the city, or it may have just have become an unwelcoming vicinity.

3.4 Reputation and settlement from the 1860s

The Irish influx manifested itself during the 1850s in overcrowding of dwellings and for a longer period in disreputable behaviour. Several fulsome examples of the nature of overcrowding are outlined in Appendix 4. The streets where the Irish were occupying 'lodging houses' were being noticed. The *Standard* 10th September 1852 seeking a clamp down on unregistered lodgings stated 'some of the wretched holes in Coventry, not recognised as "common lodging-houses," but where the Irish who are fast accumulating upon us, are huddled together in loathsome profusion, in Much Park-street, Well-street, Leicester-street and lastly in New-buildings…' John Vice, the Inspector of Nuisances in June 1851 remarked that 'most of the houses occupied by the

[82] The *Coventry Standard* 16th August 1850 stated McKeough was blind.
[83] In 1861 while ribbon weavers and coal wharf labourers were plentiful in Leicester Street, at 42 lived Richard Bradshaw, a proprietor of houses, and at 40 resided Frederick Payne an Inspector of Police, so it was not completely anarchic.
[84] The behaviour of Bridget Lynes is referred to in Appendix 4.
[85] The Smith family was also in Leicester Street in 1881 RG11/3074.92.22 ED 24. Also in 1871, lodging at No 34 was Dublin tailor John Pengilly age 26 years. In the Industrial Home, Mary A McConnor 11 years, and Sarah A Johnson 8 years, both were Irish-born in training for service. RG10/3182.33-38.16-25 ED 24.

'low Irish' were in a most filthy state and required some interference on that account'.[86] His early diligence in suppressing unlicensed lodging, led to smaller households and residential diffusion, and prevented Irish 'quarters' from developing. Their notoriety might be epitomised in a single remark by Vice. In 1854 when James Shaw was summoned for not having premises in Cow Lane whitewashed, he was advised by Mr Vice 'not to let those places to the Irish, as they were so filthy'. Mr Shaw said 'they might depend upon it he would have none of that fraternity again'.[87] The same Appendix also provides abundant examples of drunken behaviour and fracas.

There is no mention of Irish migrants in relation to the municipal distress of 1860-61, which over a severe winter saw Coventrians attend soup kitchens, and engage in levelling Whitley Common which was a work project created by a relief fund.[88] Prints of the time (Figure 3.9) show scenes reminiscent of the dire conditions found in Ireland during the Famine. The plight of Coventry was known in Dublin where 'A Divinity Student' at Trinity College wrote to the editor of the local *Saunders's News-Letter* 22nd December 1860 regarding the Coventry weavers, saying:

> 'There are in that town upwards of 40,000 poor people utterly destitute, without fire, food or clothes, at this inclement season. I would suggest that Christmas Day would present a suitable opportunity for a collection on behalf of these poor people.'

Greenhow in his 1860 Report made only one reference to the Irish which was in relation to Palmer Lane, indicating that there was not wide-scale official concern that the migrants *per se* were a cause of serious environmental deterioration.[89] Table 3.12 provides the list of streets he selected as representative districts based on his ability to compute their diarrhoeal statistics. A number of these locations, with Palmers Lane and

---

[86] *Coventry Herald* 6th June 1851
[87] Ibid. 13th Oct 1854
[88] McGrory, *Coventry*, p. 216
[89] Edward Headlam Greenhow, Second Report of the Medical Officer of the Privy Council 1860 PP 1860 XX1X.201[2736] pp. 65-77. He outlined the results of his enquiry into the circumstances that gave rise to higher mortality rates from diarrhoea. He placed Coventry first on his list for investigation followed by Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Dudley, Merthyr Tydfil, Nottingham, Leeds and Manchester. For Coventry, he was keen to discover the cause 'which renders its inhabitants unusually liable to death from diarrhoea'. His report in 1860 was important in adding to the sequence of environmental and social description of Coventry and follows Rangers report of 1849. Wolverhampton and specifically Caribee Island was the only other town from those listed where he referred directly to the Irish and singled out the 'lowest class of Irish'. In order to provide perspective on his account of Palmer Lane it is worthwhile to remind of his reference to Caribee Island: 'Some of the worst parts of Wolverhampton…[are the] ill-conditioned courts in the rear of Stafford Street. Cholera prevailed in them in 1849, and the medical men reported fever and diarrhoea as being sometimes very prevalent among the inhabitants. They have been recently channelled and supplied with water; privies have been constructed; and the courts are now regularly cleansed by the public scavengers. Although said to be much improved, they are still in bad condition. The rate of diarrhoeal mortality in these courts could not be estimated, neither could any trustworthy information on the subject of its prevalence be obtained from the inhabitants, who belong to the lowest class of Irish and frequently change residence'.

Greyfriars Lane, are now considered with maps showing their Irishcom distributions in 1861 and in 1881, thereby revealing adjustments which had occurred over 20 years. Map 3.9 shows collectively, with Leicester Street, the location of these considered vicinities. As in the census pages in the following narrative, C if used represents Courtyard, and H if used stands for House.

Palmer Lane

Living conditions in the lane were always poor. The *Standard* 14th September 1849 reported that several butchers were summoned for keeping swine there. Five years later the situation had not improved with the *Herald* reporting on 29th September 1854 that summons had again been issued to a number of persons. At the hearing Vice, Inspector to the Corporation gave his opinion that all pigs must be removed from Palmer Lane. Among others summoned was William Millerchip, who was given a week to remove his pigs. Mr Barton, the surgeon, stated Millerchip's pigs 'were a nuisance, being so surrounded with houses. There was so much disease [diarrhoea] in that district, that it was necessary they should not be allowed to be kept.'

Said Greenhow in 1860:

> 'Palmer Lane is a narrow, dirty, ill-kept street, and the worst conditioned in Coventry; the courts, five in number, are confined, ill ventilated, and filthy; the population is squalid, a large proportion of it consisting of the lower order of Irish, who are usually dirty in personal habits, and engender filth wherever they congregate. The privies in Palmer Lane were in almost every instance in foul condition, and sometimes were placed in close proximity to the dwellings; pigs were kept in several of the courts; in two of the courts are slaughter-houses, and in a third there was, at the time of inspection, a large heap of stinking manure. The soil of all the courts is saturated with filth. Bad enough as is the present condition of the street, it is represented as being in a much better state than formerly. Several houses have been pulled down, and the courts have been partially opened out by the removal of ruinous buildings, so as to improve the ventilation…some of the houses are let out in single rooms…There has been considerable mortality from diarrhoea in the street which, if seven persons be allowed for each house now standing, would exhibit an annual death-rate of 5.5 per 1000 persons for the last five years.'[90]

The impression taken from this description is one of Irish concentration and that the Irish were responsible for the lane's grim condition because of their assumed tendency to 'engender filth'. The description of the physical condition of this lane is close to the classic denotation of the 'Irish slum' and similar to the surroundings detailed by Finnegan that were experienced by the Irish in the Walmgate area of York referred to in Chapter 1. She added that York's Irish population was so transient that it was

[90] Greenhow, Second Report, pp.74,75

'practically replaced at each census.'[91] This Coventry lane also displayed the same post-Famine immense transience. No named Irish, present in 1851, could be found in the lane in the next census, nor were those listed in the lane in 1861 to be found there a decade later. However as Table 3.13 shows, the scale and intensity of this mere lane was different to that of Walmgate, York. Britannia Yard in Walmgate, featured by Finnegan for its intensive settlement of poor Irish and its reputation for rows and overcrowding contained in 1851 a population of 171, of whom 154 Irish. The corresponding figures for 1861 were 132 (120) and for 1871 were a remarkable 91 (89).

The transience in the lane was not dissimilar to what was occurring to the population at large in other central streets; Greenhow had remarked on Court 34 Gosford Street that 'the houses are old, and the rooms low and population so migratory'.[92] Table 3.13 indicates the Irishcom, even with a serious presence in 1851, never numerically monopolized the lane, especially around 1861 to justify Greenhow's remark of the time that they comprised 'a large proportion' of the lane.[93]

[91] Finnegan, *Irish in York*, pp. 48, 61, 159

[92] Greenhow, Second Report 1860, p. 72

[93] The occupying Irish in 1861 were:

At *3 Palmer Lane*, lived John Ganley 26y, a masons labourer, with his wife Whinifort 25y, a charwoman, both Irish-born, and their 4 (eldest 9y) Coventrian children (6 in household).
In *C3* lived Ann Barrett 23y, her sister Mary 19y, both Irish-born unmarried charwomen, and 2y John, who was Anne's son, born in Birmingham (3 in household). Also residing in *C3* was Bridget Mullin 36y, another unmarried Irish-born charwoman (1 in household). In *C3* likewise was John Charney 34y, an ag labourer and wife Mary 34y, a laundress, both Irish-born (2 in household). The previous three households shared the dwelling with 3 other non-Irish small households.
Next in *H4C4* 'Palmer Lodging House' resided Martin Bass 50y, an ag labourer and wife Mary 45, a laundress both Irish-born, and their 3 (eldest 5y) Coventrian children,with 4 Irish-born lodgers, 3 of whom were ag labourers, and also a 70y, school master totalling 9 Irishcom (5 other lodgers completed the household at 14).
In *H10C4* was Martin Jennings 38y, a silk thrum dealer and wife Anne 25y, both Irish-born, their 3 (eldest 5y) Coventrian children and a 22y, boarding charwoman from Ireland (6 in household). (Jennning's subsequent behaviour is related in Appendix 4)

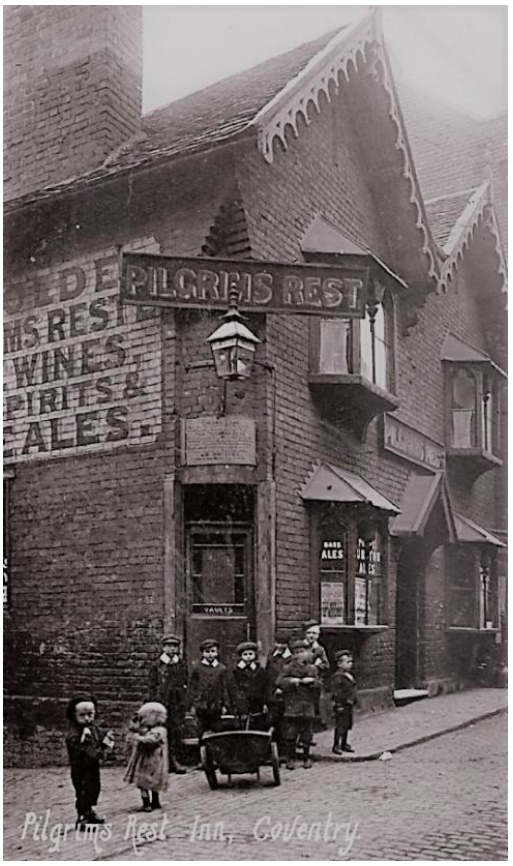


Figure 3.2 (Left) Palmer Lane looking North from Ironmonger Row, 1934. 'C' on Map 3.3A marks the position a little forward of where the camera stood.
Figure 3.2A (Right) Pilgrims Rest Inn on the corner of Palmer Lane and Ironmonger Row.
The door to right in Figure 3.2 was the entrance to the Pilgrims Rest Public House

Map 3.3. (Top) Palmer Lane showing location of Irishcom in 1861. Map 3.3A. (Bottom) Palmer Lane showing location of Irishcom in 1881.[94]

[94] Underlying Map © British Library

The lane had an unsettled reputation throughout the century (Appendix 4).[95] Maps 3.3 & 3.3A indicate that Court 4 displayed a stronger cluster of Irishcom in 1881 than in 1861. Table 3.14 in listing the Irishcom occupants of the court reveals the licensed lodging house acted as a local attracting force to fresh Irish-born. Its Irishcom numbers also included Coventry-settled Irishcom: 7 members of the Richard Gahegan family and 5 of the Sheridan family who were all born in Coventry. Richard featured first as a lodger of Owen Grogan in 1851 and had been in front of the bench on fourteen occasions since. There was a settled feel to the Court in 1881 as many of its occupants such as Cicely and Catherine Burke, Mary Riley and the Sheridan and Gahegan households were present in 1871. Close by in New Buildings lived a troublesome Austin Ryan with his family and his boarder Patrick Mortimer, both bricklayers' labourers from Mayo. In 1874 Ryan and a Patrick Dufley had attacked James Rouse in the Falcon Inn, Well Street.[96] Mary, wife of Austin was charged in 1875 with threatening to cut the head off a widow called Eliza Smith.[97] Austin Ryan and Mortimer were part of a 'Five Irishmen' group referred to later, while Mortimer's strategic marriage to Catherine Burke is outlined in Appendix 2. Mayo-born labourer Mark Burns who was an unmarried lodger of Cicely Burke in 1871, was charged in 1877 with violently assaulting his wife Coventry-born Mary Ann in Palmer Lane.[98] She appeared in court with a black eye and said he had beaten her badly. He had previously been sent to gaol for treating her cruelly and on this occasion he was sent to prison for three months with hard labour. They were still living together with their 3 young Coventry-born children in Fleet Street in 1881.[99]

Map 2.4 shows the unhealthy environs of the lane in 1897.

---

[95] The *Coventry Herald* 23rd June 1848 reported four prostitutes, occupying apartments in Palmer Lane were charged with disorderly conduct. The *Coventry Herald* 11th May 1849 reported that three women charged as prostitutes 'belonged to one of the infamous brothels in Palmer-lane, the resort of thieves and characters of the worst description'. The *Coventry Herald* 11th November 1887 reported that Harriett Perrin H3C2 Palmer Lane was summoned for keeping a brothel in Palmer Lane. See Appendix 4: 13th July 1866; 12th December 1873; 15th October 1880; 25th May 1883.
[96] *Coventry Standard* 19th June 1874
[97] Ibid. 13th August 1875
[98] Ibid. 25th May 1877. According to the *Coventry Standard* 3rd September 1875 Mark was fighting in June in Ironmonger Row. When summoned he then absconded and only surrendered in September.
[99] RG11/3069.69.10 ED 29; Mark was found in the Workhouse in 1901.

New Buildings

Map 3.4. (Top) New Buildings showing Irishcom 1861.
Map 3.4A. (Bottom) New Buildings showing Irishcom 1881.[100]

[100] Underlying Map © British Library

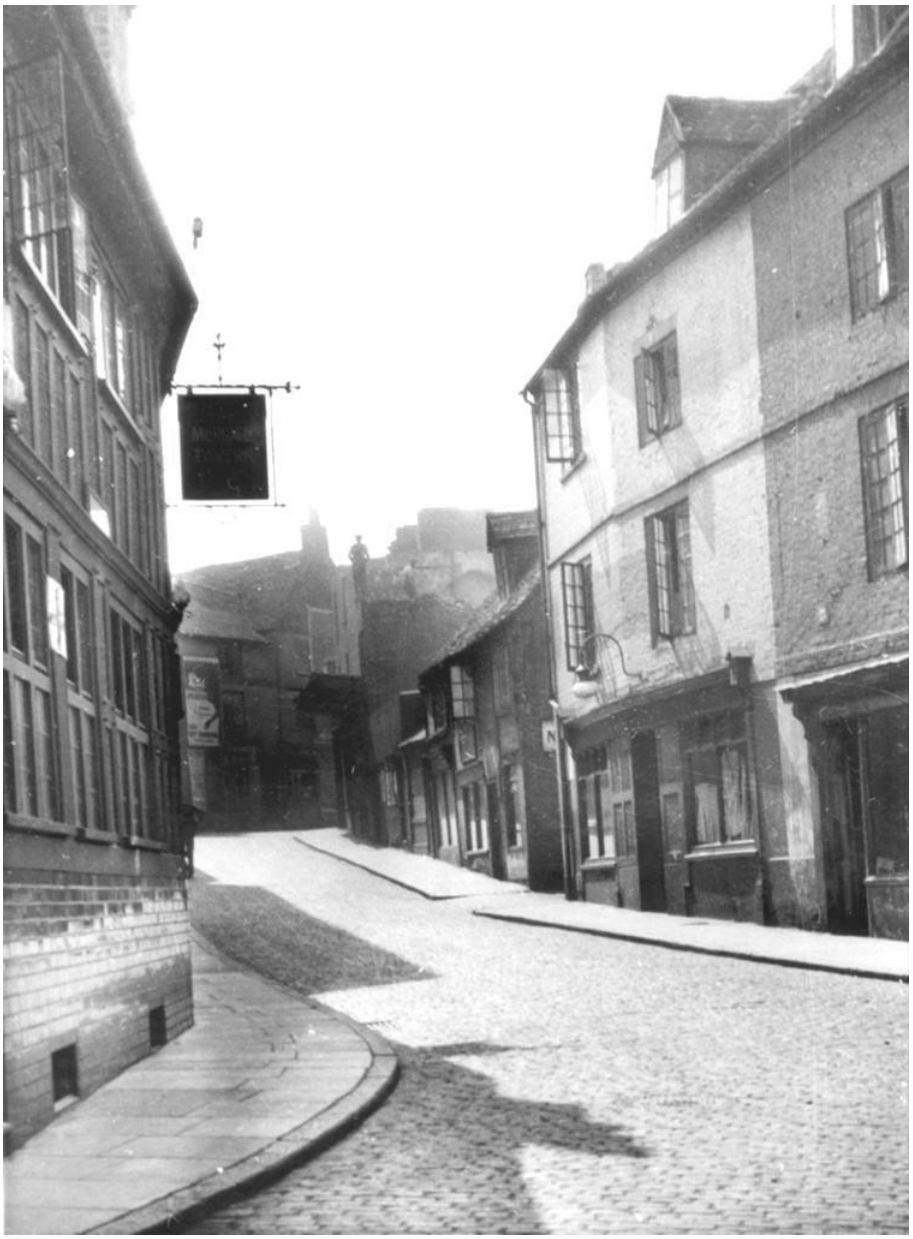


Figure 3.3 New Buildings, during demolition of old property, 1935. 'C' on Map 3.4A marks position of the camera.

In the vicinity of Palmer Lane and in the heart of the town, New Buildings, best described as forming a Y shape, ran from Ironmonger Row toward Hales Street. Smithfield cattle market and three timber yards were close by. The Irishcom numbered 54 in 1861 and 39 in 1881. Though thus diminished since 1861 Map 3.4A shows a household presence particularly in Courts 3 and 4, in 1881.[101] Michael Hogen, a shoemaker, and family were present in both years, so was John McHale a general dealer, with his family, as was John Moran. The Ryan family was also settled in the Lane. The *Herald* 5th July 1861 reported:

[101] Susanna Foster wife of William who was the 'Instructor of Volunteers' provided the Irishcom connection for the family of 8 Irishcom shown in the Armoury in 1881 (Map 3.4A).

> 'An Assault. John Moran, provision dealer, New Buildings, appeared in answer to a summons, charged with assaulting a boy named Henry Duckman. It appeared from the evidence of the boy that he was in New-buildings about half-past seven o'clock, on Monday morning last, selling whey, when the defendant remonstrated with him for making so much noise. The boy very indiscreetly said there was nobody to awaken at that hour except the Irish, and they were of no account. Moran being an Irishman himself, took this as an insult, and beat him severely. Moran was fined 1s and costs.'

West Orchard

Greenhow had no concern over any particular courts and remarked:

> 'West Orchard is a long narrow street said to have formerly been in a wretched condition. ...diarrhoea used to prevail to a great extent…The street was subsequently drained and otherwise improved, and the River Sherbourne, which flows near to it, cleaned. The public health of the street and adjoining courts is said to have greatly improved.'[102]

It is surprising that Greenhow did not mention Caldicott's Yard, in West Orchard with its apex at the confluence of the Radford Brook and the River Sherbourne, where a large contingent of Irish was located. J.R. Martin it will be recalled wrote it was as an extensive court and was a most offensive compound of everything detrimental to health. In it a number of houses were built to the edge of these watercourses – indeed House 10 was built over the brook, so they could have suffered from dampness, vermin, river odours or flooding. Houses backing on to the Sherbourne were three storied, which would have provided extra space to take in lodgers. In 1760 there were four houses on the site which had increased to 22 in the years close to 1790, so by 1860 these houses, built to an eighteen century design were at least seventy years old.[103] It is suggested that Irish gathered here because rents were affordable to those with low-income occupations and it was close to the market area for hawkers, two of which are shown in Table 3.15. West Orchard was a street reputed for taking in lodgers and thus attractive to newcomers. A known Irish presence in the vicinity would attract other Irish anxious to hear word from compatriots of job opportunities. It is likely that the court itself had an appeal because the brook and particularly the bounding river, together with the single street entrance, gave it the comforting feel of an enclave. The problems caused by proximity to the river may have made it less attractive to Non-Irish renters, as might the reputation of some of its 1861 occupants: Charles O Donnell and Richard Gallagon.[104]

The *Herald* 30th December 1853 reported that John McIntyre was charged by John Vice with maintaining an unregistered lodging house in Caldicott's Yard. Vice said, in

---

[102] Greenhow, Second Report, p.70

[103] N.W. Alcock, Housing the Urban Poor in 1800: Courts in Atherstone and Coventry, Warwickshire, in *Vernacular Architecture*, Vol. 36 (2005) p. 55

[104] Richard Gallagon/Gahegan had moved to Palmer Lane in 1881

any case he could not register the house as it was unfit for lodging. There were only two rooms, one above and one below. In McIntyre's kitchen there was a bed where he slept with his wife. Upstairs four men slept in two beds and a little boy who was McIntyre's son slept on the floor. He had been cautioned in the past without success.[105] The confined conditions coupled with the personalities residing therein meant that the yard had a charged atmosphere with their rowdy antics referred to on a number of occasions in newspapers.[106]

The relative abandonment of Caldicotts Yard by Irish is visible in 1881 in Map 3.5A, and it was devoid of Irish in 1891.

[105] See Appendix 4 *Coventry Standard* 14th September 1849

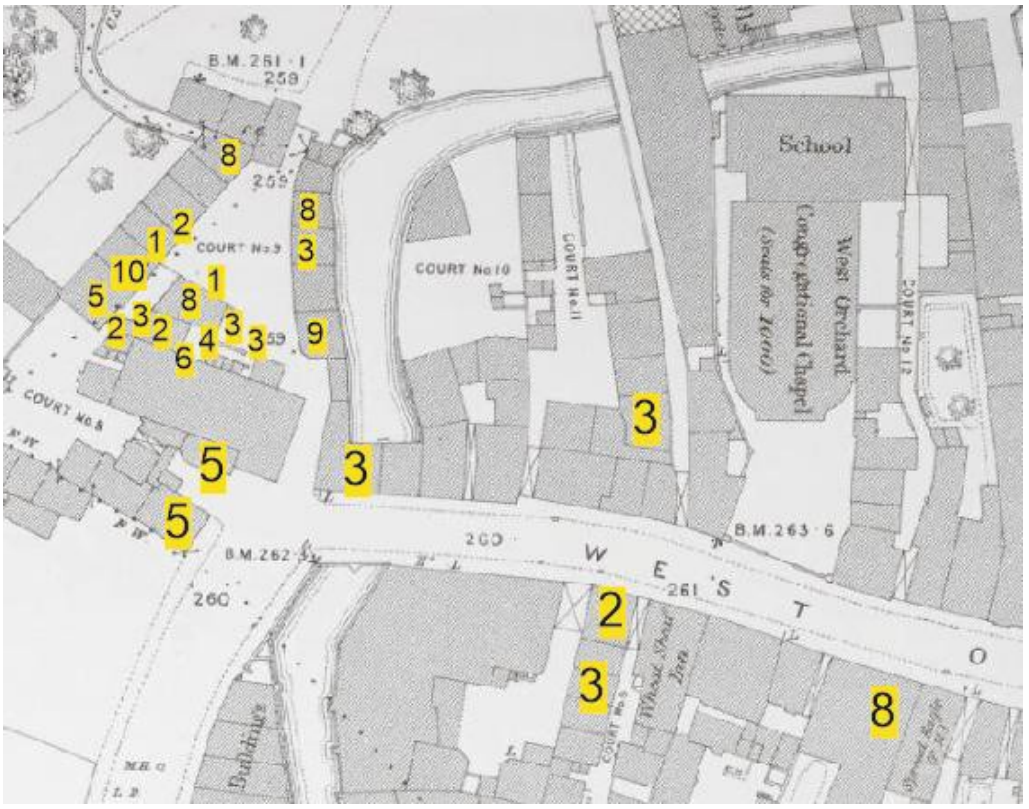
[106] On 18th Nov 1853 the *Standard* reported on the behaviour of James Harvey who in future years would frequently appear before the Bench.

> 'James Harvey was charged by James Moore, both Irish-men, with assaulting him on Saturday night. This arose out of one of those frequent rows which take place in Caldicott's yard, at the bottom of West-orchard, and in the present case, as usual, hammers, pokers, and other such articles were freely used about the heads of the combatants, and Moore came in for his share of wounds and bruises. On the other hand, the defendant, Harvey, whose face showed he had been very brutally treated, proved, by the evidence of an Englishman, that he was first beaten, and his head broken with a hammer. –The case was dismissed.'

A christening led to a melee and assault on a constable on 28th December 1855 (Appendix 4). The very same behaviour occurred in January 1860 when on the 13th the *Standard* recorded:

> 'An Irish Christening – Richard Gallaghan was charged with being drunk and disorderly and assaulting a constable in West Orchard, at one o'clock the same morning. This was a case of [a] fierce Irish row in Caldicott's Yard, and the prisoner was a participator in the fray…He promised to take the pledge…Mary Kearney, John Kearney and Patrick Brannan were also charged…all concerned in the Hibernian rumpus…'

Thomas Kelley alias Gallaghan was charged with rescuing Richard from the police constable. At the time he avoided apprehension 'but his curiosity prompted him to come to the Court and see how his companions fared' whereon he was taken into custody. All were fined various amounts. Richard was again before the court in August 1861 for being involved in a tremendous 'Another Irish Row' fully described in Appendix 4. This appendix also describes Thomas Gahagan's involvement in a fight leading to the death of Samuel Oliver in West Orchard in 1871.



Map 3.5. Irishcom in West Orchard in 1861. The popularity of Court 9 is apparent
Map 3.5A. Irishcom in West Orchard in 1881.[107]**.**

[107] Underlying Map © British Library

Gosford Street

While Greenhow expressed concern over Courts 11, 14, 34 and 44, he reported the total of 43 courts in the street as in good condition, ‘open, airy, and often have garden ground at their further end.’ There were no Irish in the courts of concern. The presence of Irishcom in the vicinity of Gosford Street, listed in Table 3.16 is represented in Map 3.6 (See Figure 3.4).

Involvement in the silk trade, shoemaking and tailoring is evident, as is origin in Dublin, Cork and Kilkenny. It is suggested that if Catherine Manning and Mary Tomms were not sisters then they were good friends. Further, it is suggested that most of the persons in 1861 shown in the Table would have known each other simply from the length of time they had spent in the vicinity. Lydia Cleaver had come to Coventry over 26 years ago, Mary Tomms over 23 years ago, the Spiller family between five and twelve, while the Eaton family had arrived within the last seven years. In 1881 the only Irishcom household to be found in the area covered by Map 3.6 was at H3C22 which was that of Coventry-born shoemaker John Piggott 71 years, and Ann, his Dublin-born wife, and 2 adult sons born in Coventry. The Irish in this part of the street appeared to have an older-settled feel about them if measured by the the more frequent mention of other ‘Irish’ areas during proceedings before the magistrates.

Figure 3.4 Gosford Street. 'C' on Map 3.6 marks position of the camera.

This rare image looks east on Gosford Street; the languid scene hides as much as it reveals. Map 3.6 shows the arched entrance just left of centre, through a long passageway, provided access to Court 22. The group of people are standing in the vicinity of entrances to Courts 23 and 24. The windowed top shops in this weavers' area of the city are noticeable. The large windows must have rendered buildings cold in winter, while the chimney stacks having each but one chimney pot also suggests these houses were not sufficiently warmed. Perhaps in order to preserve heat some of the windows on the building to the left have been bricked up. It may also have been because the heavily windowed walls did not offer enough support to the upper part of the building; the flanged walls seen on either side of the entrance to Court 22 suggest the brickwork between them was flimsy. In 1861 the New Inn (with gas lamp attached) contained Coventrian publican & butcher John Cluley, 46 years, his family of 7, together with 12 lodgers and 1 visitor. Court 22 contained 28 persons, Court 23, a total of 34 persons and Court 24, a total of 35 persons.

In 1871 the New Inn was the residence of Coventrian tailor & publican William Lea, 62 years, his Irish-born wife Jane, 58 years, and Coventrian daughter Jane, 19 years, who was a dressmaker.

Map 3.6. Gosford Street near bridge over the Sherbourne showing Irishcom 1861. 'C' marks position of the camera taking the image displayed in Figure 3.4.[108]

Much Park Street

Of the street Greenhow said:

> 'It was open and airy… with about 40 courts inhabited by the poorer classes, and frequently entered from the street through narrow arched passages…Almost all the houses and courts have water laid on from the public works…A few of the courts are provided with waterclosets, the remainder with privies, which are well away from the houses…'

Greenhow expressed concern over Courts 21, 27, and 33. His concern centred on the location of toilets:

> 'Privies have been built against houses, as in court 27, or are so situated as to be offensive to the inmates of neighbouring houses as in court 21.'

Court 21 (Marked B on Map 3.7) contained 2 Irish families that of Thomas Gallagan and of Ann Brennan.[109] Greenhow's wording could mean that either Court 20 or Court

[108] Underlying Map © British Library

[109] Court 21:

> *H1*, Thomas Gallagan, 21 years, a labourer, his wife Catherine, 22 years, who was a charwoman, and his mother in law all from Mayo. Their infant son and a child both Coventrians completed the family (5 in household).

22, was responsible for the offensive odour in Court 21. *Court 22* (Marked 'B' on Map 3.7) contained 4 Irish families, that of Patrick Burne, Martin Byrne, Michael Gallagan and Edward Clarke.[110] The dominant Galligan presence in this (and Court 21), and their Burne/Byrne relationship together with the Mayo/Roscommon origin is apparent. The familial strength of the Galligan/Gallegin household, a contingent that arrived in Coventry circa 1850 and whose tough members frequently caught the attention of the police is shown in the 1851 census (Table 3.8; Appendix 4).[111] By 1881 there was no Irish presence in the Court.[112]

H4, Ann Brennan, 50 years, who was a widow and a marine store dealer, with her 3 children all from Mayo (4 in household).

[110] Court 22:

H1, Patrick Burne, 50 years, a labourer, his wife (most likely a Galligan), Mary 40 years, 4 children, the eldest 12 years, all born in Coventry, and 3 lodgers - Richard Galligan, 61years, a widower, Mark Galligan, 21years, and Michael 18 years, all labourers from Mayo (9 in household).

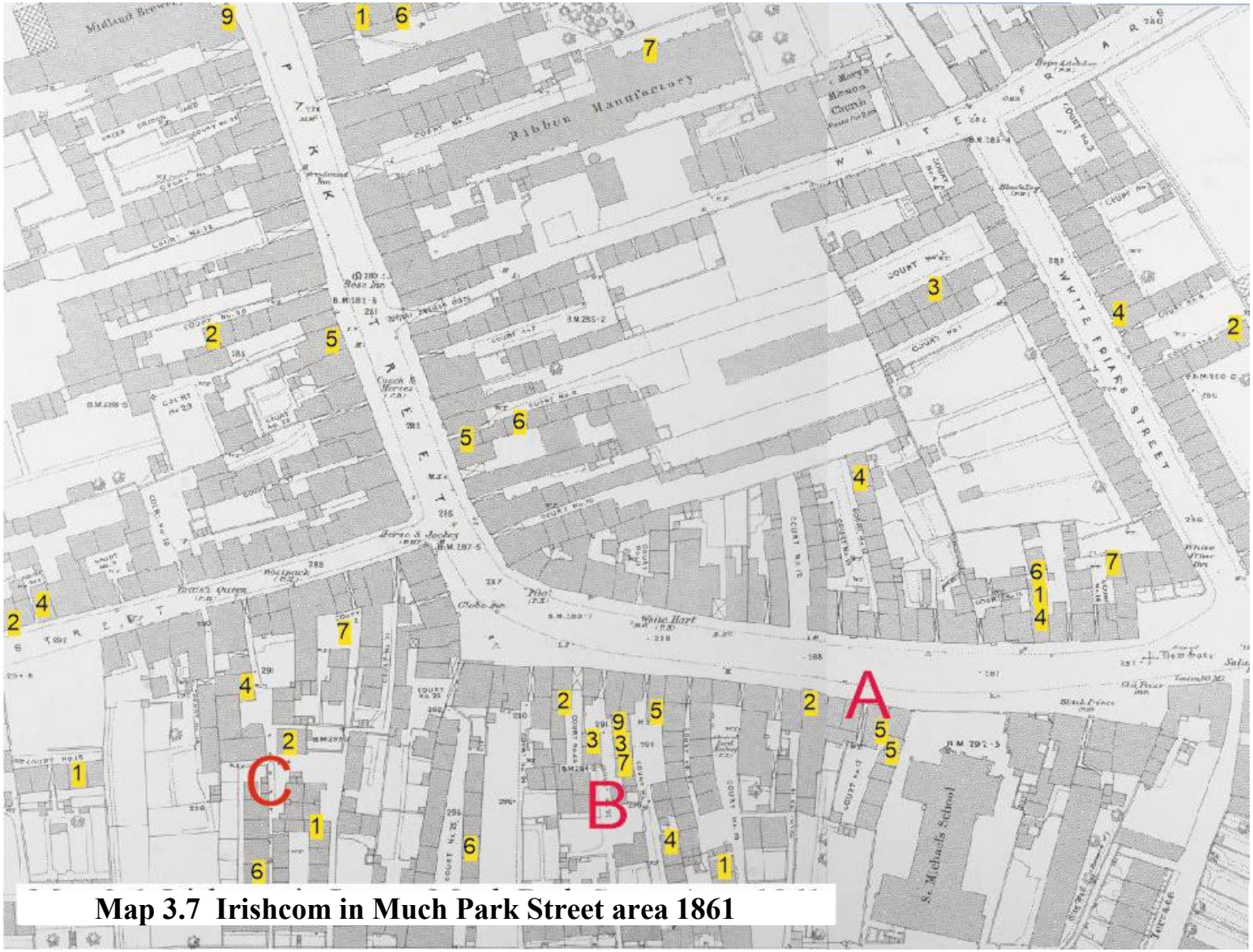
H2, Martin Byrne, 45 years and his wife Bridget, 40 years, a housekeeper, both from Mayo and John Gallaghan a grandson, 2 years, born in Coventry (3 in household).

H3, Michael Gallagan, 40 years, a labourer, his wife Ellen, 30 years, both from Mayo and 3 children, the eldest 5 years, all born in Coventry, niece Mary Gallagan, 22 years, from Mayo and her 2 year old Coventrian son Thomas (7 in household).

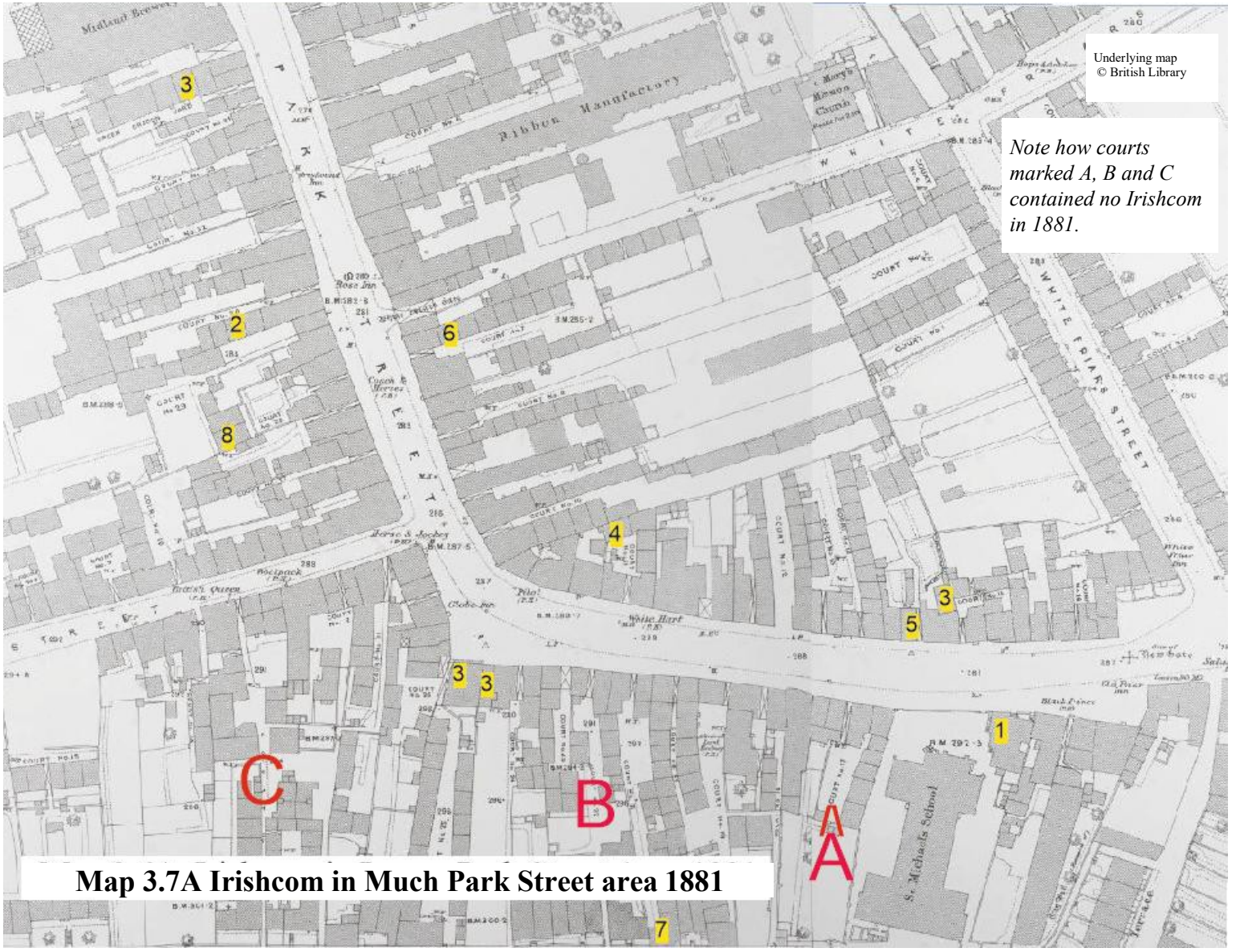
H6, Edward Clarke, 45 years, a labourer, his wife Hannah, 40 years, a housekeeper and son Edward 17 years, a watchmaker and gilder, all from Roscommon (3 in household).

[111] The labouring unskilled occupations of the recent arrivals is clear but Edward Clarke's son working as a watchmaker and gilder and Ann Brennan's 2 daughters aged 18 years and 16 years who both worked as silk fillers, most likely in Hart's ribbon manufactory that was further up Much Park Street, show that Irish could quickly align with the established occupations of the city. RG9/2202.21-24.8-13 ED10.
Ten years earlier Edward Clarke, then described as a hawker, and family were resident in Much Park Street. So too was Patrick Burn who had left Castlebar in 1837, while in 1851 James Galegin, 20 years, a labourer and wife Hannah, 30 years, headed a household of 14 which included 12 lodgers from Ireland, 10 of whom were called Galegin. HO107/2067.210.24 ED 11; HO107/2067.249-250.16-18 ED 12

[112] In 1871 in H4 of Court 22 was resident James Davitt a 42 year old widower from Cork with his 5 local- born children ranging in age from 14 to 7. The Husselby family still resided at H5. These were the only families left in the Court, amounting to 11 persons of whom 1 was Irish-born and 6 Irishcom. The Burne and Galligan families so prominent a decade earlier had left.
As for Court 21, in 1871 Michael Galligan/Gahagan and his family who was residing in Court 22 had now moved into H8 and were the only Irish therein.[112] In 1874 four boys including Michael Gahagan's son William were defendants in court charged with behaving in a disorderly manner and using bad language. They were accused of making a great noise and kicking the doors of houses fronting Much Park Street. They had to reappear with their fathers, and were then reprimanded and told to keep the peace for three months. Perhaps his father did not provide William with examples of good behaviour since in July 1874 Michael was charged and pleaded guilty to fighting in New Buildings. (*Coventry Standard* 23rd January 1874 and 31st July 1874; RG10/3175.76-77.15-17 ED 6).



Map 3.7 Irishcom in Much Park Street area 1861



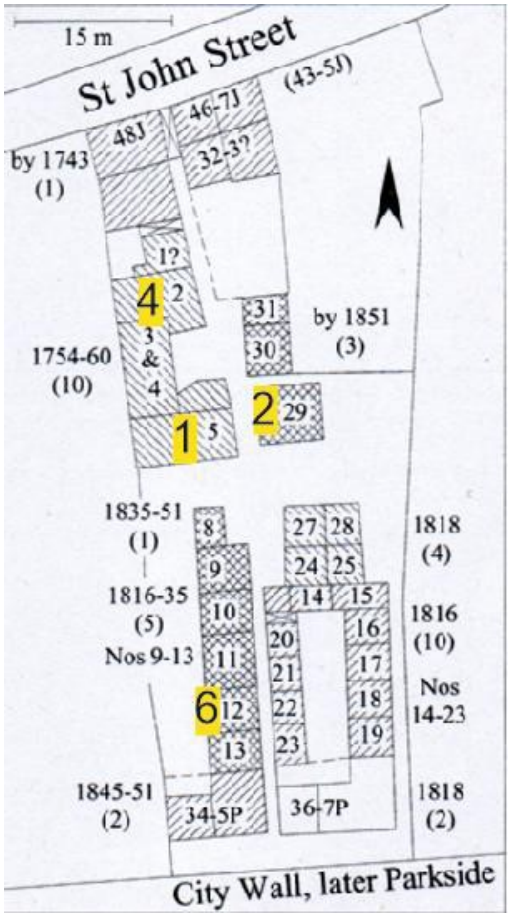
Map 3.7A Irishcom in Much Park Street area 1881

Figure 3.5 Court 17 Much Park Street Marked 'A' on Map 3.7. *Images taken from within courtyards are extremely rare. This image of Court 17 Much Park Street looks north. Though undated it appears little altered from the publication of Map 3.7 in 1888. The five court houses are to the right and regrettably not shown but according to the map are of varying size and have no back doors. Visible is the rickety condition of the buildings, actual length of the entrance, common water tap, common outdoor toilet in left foreground together with the unsightly refuse placed along the wall. Table 3.17 shows the Irishcom who resided in the court in 1861 and 1871.*

St. Johns Street

Greenhow expressed concern over the ventilation, condition and location of privies in Courts 4, 5 and 22, which did not contain Irishcom. Otherwise he was satisfied with what he saw as a narrow street that contained 16 courts. Interest in Court 13 of this street is prompted by the concentration of Irishcom within, the availability of 2 images and plan showing the layout and piecemeal development of the court. The easterly end of the street where the court was located could be seen as more within the Irish ambit of Much Park Street. Table 3.18 shows the Irishcom occupancy of the court with the presence of a lodging house an attracting factor. The street was devoid of Irish in 1881

Figure 3.6 (Left) H2C13 St. Johns Street. Figure 3.6A (Right) H14C13 St. Johns Street – a court within a court. Marked 'C' on Map 3.7.[113]



The woman in Figure 3.6 appears to be standing at the corner of House 2. The girl in the white dress in Figure 3.6A is standing in front of House 14.

Figure 3.7
Plan of Court 13 St. Johns Street 1851 with dates of developments.
Showing Irishcom in 1861.

[113] Alcock, Housing the Urban Poor, p. 56

Greyfriars Lane

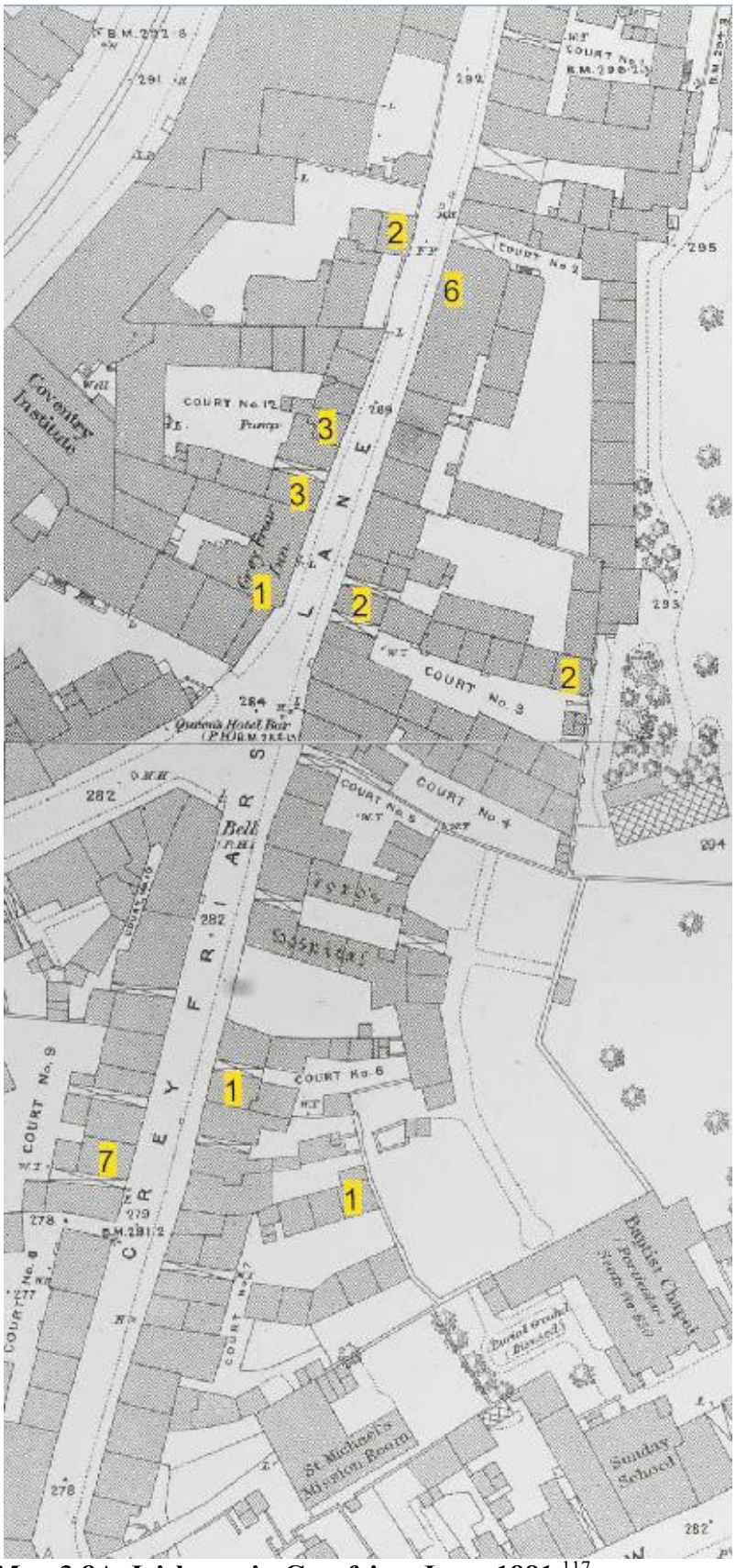
Greenhow did not refer to this most central narrow lane that ran north into the High Street and contained 12 courts. With adjacent Warwick Lane it was popular with Irish, containing 120 Irishcom in 1851 and 96 Irishcom in 1861. Though some who gave Ireland as their birthplace were undoubtedly from Mayo, not one of those who proffered a county stated they were from Mayo in 1861. In that year fourteen household heads described themselves as labourers. Though still found in 1881, Irishcom representation had thinned in many of the courts. In the 1850s a number of Irish incidents e.g. overcrowding, were reported from the area and are noted in Appendix 4.[114] The area had an unsavoury reputation and was called a 'back slum'.[115]

[114] See Appendix 4 in particular: 28th September 1849, 25th April 1851, 19th August 1853, 26th May 1854, 6th August 1858, and 5th July 1859.

[115] A disturbance in Greyfriars Lane that involved a fatality prompted the *Coventry Standard* 18th November 1864 to comment that the vicinity of Greyfriars Lane was a sink of iniquity. 'Sometimes the ordinary level of crime in the lane is passed, and its customary drunkenness, debauchery, riot, and robbery, lead to crimes still more awful…. A more repulsive neighbourhood than this lane can hardly be conceived. One may imagine that showy gin palaces which characters frequent may have a certain amount of attraction for the depraved. But the miserable holes of public-houses in the lane - what must the people be who are attracted to them? It seems to be a custom for the landlords of these houses, or at all events some of them, to hold other dens near, which houses are used for the vilest of purposes. Many of these are in filthy yards; they do not appear to have been built for houses; but with respect to size, comfort, ventilation and dirt, they seem rather to partake of the characteristics of the pigstye. There are front ways and back ways; ways from one house to another; tortuous windings and mazes in yards; low passages through which you have to creep; and in short plenty of facilities for easily baffling any one not conversant with the locality.' There was no mention of Irish or blame attached to them for the reputation of the vicinity.

Map 3.8. Irishcom in Greyfriars Lane 1861.[116]

[116]Underlying Map © British Library



Map 3.8A. Irishcom in Greyfriars Lane 1881.[117]

[117] Underlying Map © British Library

Well Street

Greenhow did not express concern over any particular court and was relaxed about the conditions in Well Street which had benefitted from the municipal improvements in the 1850s. He reported: 'Runs parallel to the Radford Brook which, so recently as two years ago, received the soil from nearly all the privies on side of the street'. However in the *Herald* 17th November 1871 William Henry Green of the Pheasant Inn, 27 Well Street, just at the edge of Figure 3.8 (the large entrance to the right is the opening to Pheasant Yard), was prosecuted for keeping pigs. Likewise prosecuted for keeping pigs was Mary Ann Sheppard licensee of the Wagon and Horses, 7 Well Street. Meetings of the Land League were held in both of these pubs in the 1880s suggesting the street had some recognition as being an 'Irish' one.[118] Table 3.19 shows the occupancy and movement in and out over over forty years for what Mulkern called an 'infamous' court.[119] The *Times* 30th June 1880 told that John Grogan of that court was bound to the peace for 3 months after Elizabeth Dingley complained that he threatened to "shiver her head and pull her heart out". The residence of the 'well known' Grogan and Harrity families in the 1870s and 1880s is to be noted, as is in 1891 the sole presence of one Irishcom family identified through the presence of Irish-born Elizabeth Conroy. Thomas Hennessey referred to in Chapters 4 and 5 (Appendix 2) was a substantive shoemaker and later licensee of the Wagon & Horses in Well Street. Thomas Kelly, a boot manufacturer, lived with his wife Elizabeth and family at 45 Well Street (Their residence marked by the only '6' on north side of Well Street shown in Map 3.9A). In1882 a report in the *Herald* under the title 'The mysterious death in Well-Street' outlined that following Elizabeth's death an anonymous letter had been received by the police saying her death was due to gross neglect. This prompted an inquest at which some insights into the circumstances of a migrant family emerge. They left Ireland after 1863 and Eliza who had been in Hatton Lunatic Asylum four years earlier had relapsed into insanity a year after leaving the asylum. A doctor told the inquest that while she looked emaciated it was impossible to say that her death was due to neglect or starvation. Her daughter said her father was kind to her mother. She said her mother had meat and gruel and the neighbours brought her broth. On the evening of her death she had bread, butter and tea. The Deputy Coroner told Kelly that the jury felt his conduct required censure. He had had shown no unkindness to the deceased but he was in the

[118] Meetings were also held at other venues in the city
[119] Mulkern, Irish and Public Disorder in Coventry, p. 135

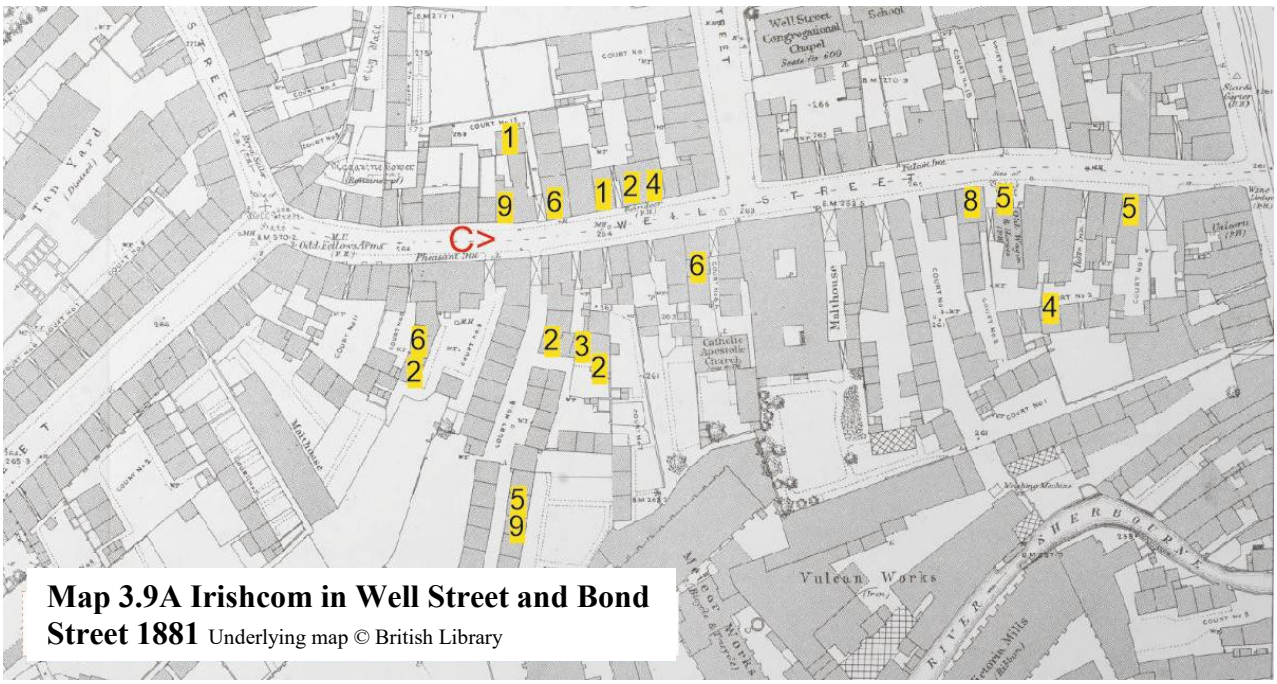
habit of drinking and had neglected to provide proper medical attention for his spouse.[120]

Figure 3.8 Well Street. 'C' on Map 3.9A marks position of the camera.

It is indeed fortunate that this evocative and relevant image has survived. It looks east along Well Street towards the Bishop Street/Burgess/Hale Street intersection. John Speed's 'The Ground Plott of Coventre' shows buildings along this street in 1610; the first floor timber overhangs of some buildings indicate they date back towards that time. The two women are walking on the south side towards Bond Street. The style of dress suggests a late nineteenth century scene. They are perfectly placed to pinpoint, with the nose of the dog, the entrance to Court 8 (See Table 3.19). It could be suggested that these women knew little of what lay behind the entrance. Map 3.9 indicates it was the entrance to what Mulkern called the 'infamous' court, where censuses noted 27 houses. In 1861 there were 32 Irishcom residing but a decade later not one of that group remained in the Court. In 1871 it contained 19 Irishcom. A remark by Superintendent Skermer in the Herald 17th September 1859 that 'the boys in this neighbourhood were exceedingly troublesome and often required a beating to keep them in order' tells that it was not a tranquil area.

[120] *Coventry Herald* 15th and 22nd September 1882

Map 3.9. Irishcom in Well Street and Bond Street 1861



Map 3.9A Irishcom in Well Street and Bond Street 1881 Underlying map © British Library

Hill Street

This street was not selected by Greenhow. It serves as an example of an 'ordinary' street; one that did not come to attention in official reports where concern was raised about the poor condition of certain street and lanes. The settlement of the Irish in this street is explored in Appendix 3 where the frequent movement of families is to be observed. Interestingly it has for mention, six of the Dublin weavers found in the 1841 census shown in Table A.1.1: Brooks, Dwyer, Elston, Fleetwood, Hare and Harris.

3.5 Crime

Appendix 4 provides a comprehensive round-up of the nature and extent of 'Irish' crime in the city. Most Irish lived in streets that encircled the town centre and so they were more likely to be noticed by the police, if they walked home in an intoxicated, boisterous mood on late-night, deserted streets. Apart from street inebriation the characteristic reasons why the Irish appeared before the courts were because they participated in alcohol fuelled fights, among themselves, or less frequently were embroiled in altercations between themselves and those that were termed the 'English'. Usually one or two policemen handled these incidents which were normally classed as petty crime. Police were not usually confronted by a group, although the presence of a 'mob' might be sensed in the background at a scene of trouble. Coventry was not a saintly city and since the law was enforced for even very minor offences, newspapers had plenty of material for their accounts about persons in front of the bench.[121] Within this reportage the colourfully overwritten 'Irish' crimes caught attention, especially in the febrile post-Famine twenty years. Without an indicator in a report, such as the word 'Irish', an Irish associated surname, faux-Irish brogue, sticks or pokers, many of these incidents would not have stood out from the generality of crime in the city.

Roberts noted how quarrelling could be actuated in slum conditions. He wrote of the tedium of the back streets:

> 'On the light evenings after a day's work many men, even if they had the desire, possessed no means of occupying body or mind. Ignorance and poverty combined to breed, for the most part, tedium, a dumb accidie of the back streets to which only brawling brought relief.'[122]

It must have also found its alleviation in public houses. The Irish brought with them a fondness for alcohol. The *Herald* 7th April 1837 related the findings of George Nicholls, Poor Law Commissioner, regarding the condition of Ireland. See Appendix 15. He also wrote:

> 'Another characteristic of the Irish, is their intemperance. Drunkenness appears to be much more common than in England…I understand their potatoe diet renders the Irish people more easily affected by the spirit than others – it may possibly increase their love for it. I have been everywhere assured that the vice of drunkenness is increasing…'[123]

---

[121] On 6th December 1873 according to the *Coventry Standard* five boys were charged with playing tip-cap, while the same newspaper on 17th January 1873 reported John Moran was summoned for not having a dog license.
[122] Robert, Roberts. *The Classic Slum*, (Harmondsworth 1974) p. 49
[123] Report of George Nicholls on Poor Laws, Ireland, PP 1837 LVI p. 5

Heinrick in 1872 remarked 'drink is the crime and curse of Irishmen in this country. It is the stigma which, of all others, is the most fatal to their character'.[124] Labouring was a thirst inducing activity and with approximately 250 public houses in the town, alcohol was readily available. Best remarked drinking places became social centres where both sexes could forget or not notice their hard existence.[125] Drinking soothed frustrations and lifted the mood of exile lament but it also lessened self-command and unleashed their resentments and grudges.

Allowance could be made for the unstable behaviour of some Irish due to effects of the basic conditions in which they lived locally, the primitive ones they had earlier endured in Ireland, together with the trauma of the Famine years. There were many migrant men in a young age cohort noted as more prone to perpetrate violence.[126] Also some Irish had plainly become alcoholics and unable to escape the toxic consequences of their addiction. Nevertheless it is obvious from the accounts detailed in Appendix 4, that some Irish had little social grace and were deviant, hot-tempered, excitable, uncouth bullies who only required alcohol or a taunt to turn belligerent and violent. They had the capacity to take deep offence at perceived slights and could use physical force in redress. The very machismo, defiant, tough reputation that was seen as disgraceful by city folk, perhaps perversely within an Irish circle of labourers, with few social attributes, was accorded a revered status. Ignored and without status in wider society, some Irish men created for themselves an 'important' reputation in Irish company through their labouring strength, capacity to drink, or willingness to settle scores with their fists.

Irish women could be as violent as their menfolk and a number were habitual drunkards.[127] Excessive drinking was frowned on by respectable society. The *Standard* 3rd February 1877 reprinted a hard-hitting pastoral from Ullathorne on the evils of visiting what he called 'vile resorts' that sell drink. He proclaimed: 'Let the Catholic man respect himself, and also the Catholic woman. Let them consider what they are,

---

[124] O'Day, *Survey of the Irish*, pp. 28, 29

[125] Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain 1851-75*, p. 242

[126] 'Young male syndrome' - The propensity of males in their mid-to late teens and twenties, and particularly unmarried and unemployed, to engage in violent altercations to resolve seemingly trivial matters. (APA Dictionary of Psychology).

[127] Bridget Lynes was fortunate in 1856 that there were no witnesses to her use of a metal jug during a violent assault that Patrick Grogan said she made on him. Thus the case was dismissed. Patrick was from Kerry and not a member of the less than angelic Grogan clan from Mayo. Bridget's true colours were revealed in print in 1875 when she was charged with violently assaulting her 12 year old daughter Rose. It transpired this was her fifth appearance in court, that she was a powerfully-built woman and was very violent when drunk, having been committed to prison for eight weeks, seven months earlier for stabbing her son with a toasting fork. (*Coventry Standard* 4th July 1856 and 21st May 1875).

and for what they are responsible. Let them shun the public-house as they would a pestilence.'

The Church was aware of the hardship caused to families by drink. Mary Ryan was charged with creating a breach of the peace in Ironmonger Row in 1875. She had caused a commotion for several hours outside the Pilgrim Inn (Figure 3.2) because the landlord refused her entry to confront her husband who had continued drinking within. She complained her husband had left her and the children without food.[128] In the same year James Harvey appeared drunk in court to answer a charge by his wife that he had assaulted her.[129]

The Irish may have signalled their ethnicity through group drunken behaviour and being so identified were at risk, in such a volatile state, of rising to taunts mischievously made by locals about the Irish. The *Standard* 12th September 1845 told how Peter Burke was charged by John Laton with assaulting him on the Burges (Table 3.2).

> 'Burke and some other of his countrymen came brandishing their sticks about, and seemed disposed to strike any one that came in their way. Burke struck him and knocked him down… Burke, whose face bore evident marks of having been roughly treated, said himself and companions had been hooted after, and very ill-used, by a number of persons in Broad Gate and Cross Cheaping…'

It is to be remembered many Irish did not come to the attention of the police at all.[130] A counterpoint to the notorious revelry of the early 1860s is mention of the renown of Armagh-born James Murray, who died in 1863 and who was responsible for designing the Coventry Corn Exchange Building (Appendix 2; Figure 3.10). The sequential outline in Appendix 4 of Irish crime may leave an appearance that Irish misconduct was disproportionately greater than that of other city dwellers. However Irish 'rows' apart, mention of Irish crime paralleled that of city crime, was predictable in type and recurrence, was petty in nature and usually involved crimes of theft. Few cases required sending to the Warwickshire Quarter Assizes.[131]

---

[128] *Coventry Standard* 13th August 1875. Mary Ryan was a 50 year old widow in 1881 residing in H11C4 Palmer Lane which was accessed behind the Pilgrim Inn. Though born in Coventry there was evidence of an Irish association: her lodger was an Irish-born hawker Bridget Killen.

[129] *Coventry Standard* 29th October 1875

[130] Swift, Crime and the Irish in nineteenth-century Britain, p. 20. He remarked that 'Countless Irish were essentially law-abiding and faced the day-to-day difficulties and uncertainties of life in the Victorian city without coming into formal contact with the law'.

[131] In the county prison opened in Warwick in 1860 there were recorded in the 1861 census 186 prisoners of whom 8 were Irish-born. RG9/2226.117 St. Mary: ED Prison.

There was no indication the Irish were treated more harshly than locals by the magistrates as Appendix 4 shows. A fine (probably more punitive than nowadays realised) was frequently imposed with a failure to pay warranting imprisonment for up to a month. Repeat offenders could be imprisoned but on occasions a promise by an accused Irish person that they would not reoffend could merit a lenient response, though it may be suspected the magistrates were not entirely convinced of the bona fides of such asservation. As the years unfolded it became clear that migrant serial offenders on alcohol charges were viewed to be acting as habitual drunkards rather than as Irish with a clichéd penchant for alcohol.

The police did not seem to have an anti-Irish agenda or unduly enforce those aspects of the law that brought them into contention with the Irish community as Swift observed as having occurred in Wolverhampton.[132] Neither was there evidence of any bad faith that was shown by the Birmingham Police during the Park Street riots.[133] The fact that the Irish did not seem to complain that they were being singled out for police harassment because of their background must have informally aided inclusion.[134] John MacDermott from Callan Co. Kilkenny was a police constable in 1851, a detective-sergeant in 1863 and in 1869 at 60 years, he was Inspector of Police. In 1841 two Irish-born women were married to police constables while in 1891 one woman was so married. Probably more irritating to the Irish was the conduct of the Inspector of Nuisances, who keenly brought cases of overcrowding before the magistrates. That said the Irish were probably cautious of the police who were the agents of another nationality.

There was no collective menace by the Irish. What was sensed by the reporter on 16th August 1850 in the *Herald* when Michael McKeogh was referred to as, 'a

Irish in Warwick Prison in the 1861 Census			
Gen	**Age**	**Occupation**	**Birthplace**
F	20	Hawker	Dublin
F	30	Married woman	Bagelly, Ireland
M	17	Sailor	Dublin
M	24	Farm labourer	Castlebar
M	16	Farm labourer	Kildare
M	23	Hawker	Kerry
M	68	Farm labourer	Kells, Co Meath
M	20	Farm labourer	Roscommon

[132] Swift, 'Another Stafford Street Row', pp. 184-187
[133] Patsy Davis, Remembering the Past: Fenian commemoration in Birmingham in *Anphoblacht* 9th November 2000. http://www.anphoblacht.com/contents/6901 Accessed 1st September 2016
[134] The police were capable of harassment. Amos Turville, a licensed victualler in Spon Street wrote to the *Coventry Standard* 21st May 1875 saying at the beginning of his letter: 'I have for a long time past been subject to a police surveillance and espionage which has become simply intolerable.'

prominent member of the notorious garrison of low Irish, about 40 or 50 of whom are crowded in a tenement or two in Leicester-street' did not endure. A crowd might be mentioned as present on occasions but it may have been comprised of curious bystanders. There were no Irish riots and Swift's observation seems appropriate to Coventry. 'The relative absence of disturbances involving the Irish [e.g. in Coventry, Chester and Leicester] signifies a measured degree of accommodation into local society'.[135] Swift distinguished generally between intra-communal brawling which he said was not of particular interest to magistrates or police unless it reached the public domain, sectarian violence, and inter-communal disorder. Only the first type featured in Coventry while it was spared the remainder[136]

In the 1870s there was less mentioning of an Irish background in newspapers. This may have been due to reduced number of fresh migrants, but also to the fact that as the settled migrants grew older, the caution of old age set in; there was a mature realisation that wild behaviour was increasingly out of place and brought discredit on them and their families. Though some such as James Harvey remained incorrigible, others may have been worn down by the repeated attention of the police, court fines and prison-time levied. As the years progressed, pointing out an Irish background in newsprint seemed an increasingly irrelevant detail in describing people who had lived for years in the city. Many were no longer easily identified as Irish, since an Irish suggesting patronymic would now belong to many persons, who had Irish parentage but had been born and resident all their lives in Coventry. This was the situation reflected in the *Times* 4th July 1877 report where Edward Hogan and David Farrell were ordered by the magistrates to enter in a bond of £10 and £5 respectively and to keep the peace for three months after they were accused of breaching it the previous Saturday. Edward was an 18 years old, Coventry-born shoemaker in 1871. He resided with Michael Hogan who was a 47 year old shoemaker from Cork, living with his 54 year old wife Sarah from Newry at 35 New Buildings.[137] Again the *Standard* 5th December 1873 recorded that Patsy Ryan, 13 years and William Moran, 14 years, (both born in Coventry of Irish parents) were involved in a gang of 16 to 18 lads who struck boys and girls with sticks as they walked through the streets.[138] One of the boys had used a rough hawthorn stick to assault a girl. The magistrates told the defendants who were found guilty that they

[135] Swift, Behaving Badly? p. 112
[136] Swift, Crime and the Irish in nineteenth-century Britain, pp. 168, 169; Appendix 4 records only one instance on 6th August 1858 where a policeman referred in an openly disparaging manner to an Irishman.
[137] RG10/3180.8.10 ED 10; The same living arrangement applied in 1881. RG11/3072.39.10 ED 10. David Farrell was not found.
[138] It is assumed that 'Patsy' referred to William who was son of Thomas Ryan, 40 years, an Irish-born labourer in 4 Spon Street. RG10/3182.51.12 ED 25

were determined to end this ‘uproarious and disorderly conduct on the part of boys’. No reference was made to an Irish background and whether these boys were part of an ‘Irish gang’, or fitted in with a local gang. Whether it was mischief, or had an Irish antagonistic second generation aspect to it remains unknown. Nevertheless Irish background could still be mentioned, as when the *Standard* 20th June 1873 reported that ‘Five Irishmen’ Michael Needham, Austin Ryan, Michael Coney, James Gill and Patrick Mortimer were charged with being drunk and riotous in Spon Street. Mortimer was lodging with Ryan’s family (Details on Mortimer Appendix 2; Table 3.14). A witness said he had to run to get away from the Irishmen, who appeared to be assaulting everyone with whom they came in contact. The defendants’ solicitor said the prisoners were insulted by some lads and this led to the disturbance. Another witness said the Irishmen seemed to be drunk and were going along the street talking loudly with each other. He heard one or two persons calling after the Irishmen and insulting them.

Chapter 4

National & Religious Identity

The previous chapter outlined aspects of the socio-cultural behaviour that identified migrants in the post-Famine years. This chapter considers how 'Irish Catholic' migrants and their children's generation conveyed their identity. It concerns itself with how they expressed their relationship to Ireland and towards Catholicism. Swift noted that in mid-century these were two of the elements that negatively singled out the Irish as 'outcasts'.[1] Both were particularly fused in the Irish mind according to Jackson. (Tables 4.1, 4.2 and Appendix 6 provide detail for mid-century of Irish-Catholic marriages, and Irish declarations in the census of Catholicity).[2] Negative notions of 'Catholics' and the 'Irish' were separately established constructs of British national identity, according to Hickman. She also saw them as concurrent and intersected. She further observed that a political identity accompanied religious affirmation in Britain.[3]

Identity has many semblances, especially for succeeding generations, as outlined in Appendix 19, but it is necessary in the chapter to channel its expression into these two streams. Panayi pointed to the inevitability of this particular approach, which he said has been a long held practice in Irish migrant studies where consideration of identity has been based on migrants treated as a block, centred on homeland, and organised around politics and religion. He blamed the paucity of nineteenth century personal accounts for absence of an individually based treatment of identity.[4]

Irish civic identity could be expressed by the nostalgic enjoyment of Irish heritage found in song, dance and story. Identity could also be expressed by sensibility to the interests of people on the island of Ireland, particularly where it concerned a yearning to alter Ireland's problematic relationship with Britain. This was referred to as 'the cause' which, given the appropriate period involved, sought, emancipation, Union repeal, 'justice', land reform, or self-government. In this regard an expression of identity might take either an anodyne or more concerted form. In the former Irish persons could share

---

[1] Swift, Behaving Badly? p. 113. He mentioned all four 'Poverty, Ethnicity, Religion and Politics'. He stated migrant experience was more complicated and diverse than is suggested by mention of these four fundamentals.

[2] Jackson, *Irish in Britain*, p. 137. He was referring to Catholic religion.

[3] Mary J. Hickman, *Religion, Class and Identity*, (Aldershot 1995) pp. 53, 54

[4] Panayi, *Immigration History of Britain, Multicultural Racism since 1800*, pp. 137, 139, 140. He remarked in 2014 that recent social-science approach has been to view migrant identity as centred on the individual. This applies especially to second and later generations whose identity might have been shaped by surroundings and so may have a dual identity. However while this approach is feasible in modern investigations, it is more difficult to pursue nineteenth century identity on an individual basis because of the paucity of personal story.

with others of like mind their sense of national distinctiveness through concurring that it was desirable progress should be made on Ireland's affairs. Disclosing that longing, may have been the limit of their embodiment of national identity. In the latter case expression took a more concerted form, perhaps with an acrimonious edge, by campaigning for the right of Ireland to be perceived as a culturally integral territory entitled to self-rule. Those who championed this idea, imbued with grievance at the manner in which Irish people had been treated by the British establishment, saw it as their patriotic duty to espouse Irish nationalist ideology. They believed all those of Irish association had an obligation to do likewise. For them it was important to have large numbers of Irish identifying themselves as supporters not only to gain political leverage but to demonstrate the organised extent of interest in the cause. However, strong advocacy for the legitimacy of Ireland's claim, while heightening public consciousness of its value, also brought into the open the oppositional resolve of those who did not agree with nationalist demands.

This chapter will explore the degree of interest the Coventry Irish maintained in the Irish question, and in the extent of its collective expression, if it helped to sustain a community bond. It will be seek out what attitudes the host population held on the notion of a self-governing Ireland, and what sort of reception the locals gave to those Irish expressing themselves in its favour. Two avenues of expression: party politics and the Land League, are explored but they were not totally separate strands as 'well-known Irishmen' could be mentioned in connection with either. The Catholic authority's facilitation of a sustained Irish identity, through the extent of its approval of Irish nationalism, which was seen by activists as 'short of sympathy' will be raised.[5] Its encouragement of Irish identity and support for those who expressed their Irish distinctness in the enjoyment of Irish cultural heritage will be reviewed. Collective enjoyment later in the century was facilitated by the Catholic Church making available its schoolrooms. However in so doing it modulated Irish cultural expression to suit Catholic taste and regulated the usefulness of cultural heritage as a means by which nationalist idealogy could be propagated.

Catholicism was the common mark of lasting separate identity that many of the migrants and their descendants possessed and shared in practice. Along with the nature of the Church's promotion of an ethnic identity, the effect of its social and moral moulding of migrant identity will be raised. Intertwined in this topic about the extent of the endorsement the Church wished to bestow on the Irish was the degree of dignity that

[5] Comment of P. O'Donnell. See Appendix 9.

the Church institution was in a position to publicly command and thence offer to its Irish adherents. The Church itself was treading charily (but on occasions provocatively) along a narrow path towards public acceptance. For much of the century when the Church faced disdain, this involved corresponding scorn for its Irish members. The generally assumed harmony between the Catholic Irish and the Catholic priesthood may not have been complete. In early years of arrival Irish Catholics may have been locally tolerated rather than liked by the Church. This may have been due to their distinctive form of Catholic religious worship which Ullathorne referred to as a 'deep Irish faith', their migrant neediness, their embarrassing local reputation for alcohol-fuelled impropriety, and a broader reputation for rebelliousness.[6] In later times the general Catholic Irish support for Liberalism with, on balance, its greater kindness to Ireland, may have been privately less than welcomed by a Church aware of the programme of secular education provision Liberals espoused.[7] Church acknowledgement of general Irish support for Liberals may have been also less than forthcoming from the clergy, because it might have drawn undeserved criticism on them from the Unionists who were influential and well-positioned the city. There did exist a subtle link between the Church and the Irish. The Church armed it adherents with a notion of certainty and rightness that was unshakeable no matter how powerful the opposition. This quality of constancy ingrained in many Irish, when applied to the desire for self-rule made for an indomitable spirit.

In general deliberation of migrant identity the stock response is to refer to that of the Irish Catholic, but there was also Irish who did not possess a Catholic national identity, and Irish with a unionist outlook who saw no advantage in subverting the political relationship between the two islands.

4.1 Nationalism

Swift observed that 'the majority of Irish immigrants had the broad political objective of redefining in some way Ireland's constitutional relationship with Britain'. This nationalist objective was according to him 'outside the range of objectives

[6] Butler, *Life of Bishop Ullathorne*, p. 126; Jackson, *Irish in Britain*, p. 137 referred to an Irish Catholic emphasis on a 'naïve faith'.

[7] The Tory approach to control of school management may have appealed more to the clergy. Arthur Kekewich the second Conservative candidate for Coventry in the 1880 election gave his view of Board Schools supplanting voluntary schools: '[It] is as unfair for the English Churchman, as for the Protestant Dissenter, or the Roman Catholic; and I shall be extremely sorry to see the day - I hope it is far distant - when, for instance, the Roman Catholic cannot send his child to the school where he thinks he may be virtuously and properly educated, and is obliged to send him to one which he thinks, and which may be and in fact is Godless'. (*Coventry Times* 17th March 1880)

accepted as legitimate by British public opinion'.[8] In the case of Coventry the opportunity to identify in a common purpose to further a separatist ambition arose in different guises over the century. There was the early century movement for repeal of the Union, the Fenian offensive and the exertion for Home Rule later in the century. However it was not until after the 1867 franchise extension that the Irish in Coventry were able to be interpreted as showing common purpose by signalling their support for political arrangements that favoured self-rule in Ireland.

Repeal of the Union

There is meagre mention of specifically Irish locals advocating in the city for political or social change during the early part of the century. A short report was published in the *Poor Mans Guardian* 2nd March 1833 which referred to the Coventry Irish Anti-Union Association statement that 'we the members … view with horror and disgust the conduct of the present administration in endeavouring to pass insurrection and gagging laws for Ireland'. No more is known of this Association. It may have related to some local reformers being annoyed at Edward Ellice the Coventry Whig MP for having voted in favour of an Irish Coercive Bill and who was seeking re-election in April.[9]

In 1843 there is a solitary reference to local Irish interest in Union repeal but the tendentious nature of the account lessens it evidential value.

> 'Mr Bairstow, a chartist, delivered an oration "on repeal" on Monday last, on Grey-friars green. His object appeared to be, to amalgamate "Repeal and Chartism." But few of the Irishmen in Coventry attended; and the meeting was a flat affair. Socialism and Chartism were never very rampant here, but just now they are at a very low ebb: the horrible doctrines of the former we trust ere long will be extinct.'[10]

The Irish in Coventry were not singled out for mention as attending the city meeting in 1844 at which O Connell spoke (Appendix 8). It is suggested the meeting hosted by the Mayor saw itself as being organized to seek in broad terms 'redress of grievances' found in a 'suffering' Ireland, and to protest at O Connell's impending imprisonment, rather than to demand Union Repeal. Ullathorne's attendance at the meeting - along with Dissenting clerics, and Radical notables - may be seen in this light, and as an opportunity for them to see the Catholic orator, rather than as supporting a specific demand for Union repeal.

---

[8] Swift, Outcast Irish in the British Victorian City, pp. 269, 270
[9] *Coventry Herald* 12th April 1833
[10] *Coventry Standard* 30th June 1843

Fenian years

The *Herald* 23rd February 1866 saw the Fenians as 'men of the most dangerous class. They are Irishmen imbued with American notions, thoroughly reckless'. Yet it was thoughtful as to what was the root cause of their activity saying:

> 'We defy anyone who looks impartially at this question to do other than come to the conclusion that as a nation we have, in great measure, ourselves to thank for the condition of Ireland… We have not considered their wants from their standpoint; we have not looked at their difficulties by the light of their experience. On the other hand we have too often pooh-poohed their petitions, have time after time treated them as aliens rather than as citizens of the same nation with ourselves; we have forced laws upon them, to which they had the greatest objection, and above all, have forced a religion upon them to which they have the greatest dislike'.

At the start of an eventful year the *Herald* 4th January 1867 wrote what would prove only half true: 'the Fenian madness has been put down; but the causes which lead to periodic conspiracy and rebellion are not removed'. Within the year on 29th November 1867 the *Herald* would outline in great detail the grim circumstances of the recent executions of the Fenians in Manchester. The editorial in the same edition was uneasy and said in a lengthy consideration that there would be opposing views for a period as to 'whether justice has been dispensed with an even hand, or vengeance has consigned her victims to the scaffold'. It outlined a view that the executed men had not set out to murder but to carry out what they saw as a patriotic and praiseworthy action in freeing Kelly and Deasy and so there was a political aspect to their behaviour which might have justified tenderness towards the prisoners.[11] It noted that the year 1867 was the first time during Victoria's reign that the scaffold was used for what could be seen as political purposes. It concluded:

> 'the fact that three lives have been taken for one, - that two men have been executed whose lives at least would not have been forfeited but for the rash act of a companion – and we cannot wonder that the national conscience should be uneasy'.[12]

The paper also mentioned a funeral procession in Birmingham where five thousand Irishmen wearing green ribbons assembled in Nechell's Green cemetery to hear a Catholic service for the dead. The close description of the merciless trauma in Manchester must surely have evoked the sympathy of many of the *Herald's* Irish

[11] The Irish-American Fenian leaders Thomas Kelly and Timothy Deasy were freed from a prison van in an ambush and spirited away to the U.S.A. During the ambush Sergeant Charles Brett who was escorting the prisoners was shot dead. William Allen, Michael Larkin and Michael O'Brien were found guilty of his murder and executed.

[12] *Coventry Herald* 29th November 1867

readers and a formed mental association with Fenians' aims, if not their methods. However unlike Birmingham there appears to have been no public gesture of commiseration in Coventry. This was seen as a time of alienation for the Irish in Britain, in contrast to their later century participation in politics, however it cannot be discovered if that sense of alienation was then present in Coventry.

The *Standard* 20th December 1867 excoriated the Fenians following the Clerkenwell explosion. They were seen as wishing to create terror throughout the United Kingdom, and viewed as similar to 'determined ruffians whose fierce passions and seared consciences make them regardless of human life'. The horror of the ensuing carnage was graphically described. While it then, in a covering sentence stated, that those who sought "Justice to Ireland" did not necessarily agree with the fiendish methods of the Fenians, it seized the opportunity to bitterly criticise those who sought the pacification of Ireland through reform. The paper in so doing left in the air a tainting insinuation associating them with Fenian violence and of stimulating Fenianism. The end objectives of those seeking reform were according to the *Standard* the same as the aims of Fenians and their contributions only encouraged the Fenians. It referred to 'Englishmen who call themselves Protestant' who called for the disestablishment of the Church in Ireland that now 'affect to be struck with pious horror, because the Fenians are going to work in a rougher way to accomplish the object, in which both they and such Englishmen concur'.[13] It did not resist the opportunity either to turn-in an attack on the Catholic Church. In a separate piece in the same edition headed 'Fenian Alarms' it said:

> 'Although spared any open Fenian demonstration, Coventry has participated in the general shock given to the inhabitants of this law-loving country, by the miscreants called Fenians in London and elsewhere. If the feeling on the subject is as strong in other parts of the country as in our old city (of which there can be no doubt), the time is at an end when there can be half measures with those who perpetrate these dastardly outrages, or even sympathise with their perpetrators. Public opinion here is that Fenianism is not a patriotic movement whether mistaken or not on the part of Irish people… There was an alarm on Tuesday about an attack said to be contemplated in Coventry, but we hope it was as groundless as it proved to be premature.'[14]

---

[13] *Coventry Standard* 20th December 1867

[14] Ibid. Two months earlier as the *Coventry Times* 9th October 1867 reported there had also been some alarm:
'The Fenians in Coventry - There has been a rumour in this City within the last few days that parties of Fenians were lurking about, and that a descent upon our volunteer depot was meditated. Whether there was any foundation for this, other than the general excitement which pervades all classes of the community, and disposes people to see mountains in molehills we cannot tell, but measures were at once quietly taken to secure the City against any *emeute* of the kind suggested.'

This alarm was a reference to a note which was left in a pillar box stating the Fenians would attempt to blow up St. Mary's Hall and St. Michael's and Holy Trinity Churches.[15] Although the letter was regarded as a hoax, it was considered wise in the light of the Clerkenwell explosion to increase the number of watchmen in the vicinity. The *Herald* informed on 20th December 1867 that 'The police are armed with the six-chambered Colt's revolver, which they carry loaded…' The paper advised that in order for their readers to form an impression of the 'fearful nature and devastating effect of the terrible explosion' in Clerkenwell, it was issuing a supplement showing sketches of the prison layout and the scene following the explosion. It editorialised that no one could have sympathy for the 'desperadoes of the wildest and most reckless type' involved in the 'diabolical outrage in Clerkenwell'.

The *Standard* 4th January 1868 reported that following the call of the magistrates over 2,000 special constables had been sworn in by the deadline date with many hundreds more prepared to make themselves available beyond it. It said; 'The feeling is general, that the fiendish atrocities of the Fenians must be stamped out at once'. The *Birmingham Daily Gazette* 9th January 1868 told of considerable alarm following the discovery on 3rd January of a second letter warning of an attack on Coventry property, found in the letter box of F. Carter, a silk manufacturer in Little Park Street. Police Chief Superintendent Norris privately met the magistrates and the view was taken 'that as there are a large number of Irish-men who have not tendered themselves as special constables', while 2,000 English had done so, the detail in the letter could not be ignored. So the police with revolvers would continue to patrol in the threatened areas. It was said the 'unparalleled distress' that was presently in the city 'may have something to do with the disaffection'.[16]

Particularly after the general revulsion of Clerkenwell it would not have been wise for Irish people to openly show sympathy for the Fenian movement. A smaller Coventry grouping of Irish would have taken heed of the partial treatment meted out to the Brummagem-Irish during their riots, recounted in Appendix 6. There may have been genuine concern felt by the authorities in their enlisting of 2,000 special constables and in the arming of police, or it may have been a showy over-reaction or a bluff. It was exclusively a response by the authorities; the number enlisting as special constables was

---

[15] *Coventry Herald* 20th December 1867

[16] *Birmingham Daily Gazette* 9th January 1868. This reference to a large number of Irish-men who have not tendered themselves as constables may have been a 'Birmingham' view on the situation. There was no suggestion in Coventry newspapers that there were any symptoms of Fenianism lurking locally. There was never mention of Irish secret societies in Coventry, though by definition their presence would not be obvious.

large, but that apart there was no swell among the local people against the local Irish.[17] The Fenian alarm quickly faded in the locality. The *Herald* 13th January 1871 reported that the Fenians were released from prison.

British mainstream politics from 1870

The widened franchise effective from 1868, gave Irish migrants a real entree to participation in the political process. In an incorporative manner it drew migrants into municipal preoccupations and into the decision making process whereby city folk together selected their politicians. It carried within it an opportunity for Irish migrants to act in common in support of Ireland's cause, which when engaged in would have strengthened their feeling of mutuality. Support for Ireland through the Coventry political machine would only ever involve migrants acting in a propping up role for whichever of the two mainstream parties at the time they viewed as being most sympathetic. Reform increased the electorate to nearly 8,000 and in the matched support for Tory and Liberal candidates a small number of marginal votes could tilt the outcome. In 1874 the total Tory (Eaton/Thornton) vote was 7,451 whilst that of the Liberals (Carter/Jackson) was 7,461 giving a Liberal majority of 10.[18]

While domestic issues featured at the hustings, the treatment of Ireland was frequently raised. However there was never a specific appeal to the Irish, by local candidates in Coventry, for support on the basis of the kindness of their Irish policy. Irish partisans saw in the situation of slender majorities the leverage that might exist - or that they could profess to exist - to promote Irish national interest. This could be effective if migrant voters could be marshalled to vote identically, according to the strategies of Irish self-rule protagonists.[19]

Again decisions taken nationally by a party may have had distasteful consequences for the supporters of the party locally. Local Liberals always felt that in Coventry they had been wrong footed by Gladstone's introduction of the Cobden Treaty which had - as they were constantly reminded for many years by opponents - disastrous consequences for the silk trade in Coventry. Local Irish who supported Liberalism

---

[17] Pistols and cutlasses were also issued to Leicester police in 1867 even though, according to Danaher, the city was not directly involved in the Fenian excitement. (Tom Barclay, *Memoirs and Medleys*, Unpaginated introduction by Nessan Danaher).

[18] *Coventry Times* 7th April 1880. In 1868 the total Tory (Eaton/Hill) vote was 7,495 while that of the Liberals (Carter/Jackson) was 7,149 giving a Tory majority of 346.

[19] A mischievous piece in the strongly Conservative *Dublin Evening Mail* as early as 1st August 1867, suggested that Coventry Catholic voters could be manipulated. It explained how the Coventry election was won. It had learnt from a reliable authority that the Whig whippers-in communicated with Archbishop Manning and Bishop Grant of Southwark through a Liberal Catholic peer. They 'at once co-operated, and sent the order for the Coventry Romans to vote for the Liberal candidate' which was enough to sway the vote in favour of Henry Jackson.

because in the wider scheme its attitude towards Ireland was more benign, may have felt it was a somewhat awkward stance to hold locally in the knowledge of city disappointment at the Liberals for ruining the silk trade. It may also have been troubling for local Irish to hear that the Liberals, who they supported in the city, could at government level turn to coercion in Ireland.

The disestablishment of the Irish church in 1869 evinced the underlying continuing resentment of the local Protestant clergy at Catholicism obtaining advantage, and also, unsurprisingly, their common outlook with Tory adherents. As with the Maynooth Grant any relief was seen as causing huge constitutional damage.[20] Rev. Mr Baynes, Vicar of St. Michael's, had justified his attendance at a Conservative Fete in the Bull-Field in June 1869 on the basis that the clergy had a duty to speak their minds about Gladstone's action, which 'not only struck at the root of the Protestant religion in Ireland but that it was doing precisely the same thing for them in England'.[21] He said 'there had been no movement within the past century which more directly tended to weaken the influence of the Church of the Reformation or strengthen the hands of the Pope of Rome'. Each of these remarks was followed by 'Hear Hear'. Alexander Staveley Hill, MP present at the fete regarded Mr Gladstone's Bill as committing sacrilege and desecration.[22] The matter of disestablishment, while reminding that whenever issues involving questions on Irish or Catholic ecclestiastical prerogatives arose, historic posturing would reliably materialise, was beyond Coventry and did not find resonance as a local issue.

The *Standard* 25th March 1870 carried the *London Times* summary of Chichester Fortescue's outline of the draconian provisions in the Irish Coercion Bill, or Peace Preservation Bill. The *Standard* quoted the *Pall Mall Gazette* which agreed with the measure, but felt it contained a number of weaknesses that would lessen its effectiveness, and thought it should have been introduced earlier. The *Standard* was in favour of the measure and took a certain glee from the fact that it was embarrassing for the Liberals to find themselves introducing coercion.

The 1880 Election

James Pinches (1837-1897), a watch finisher, who was from an old local Catholic family, was on good terms with the local clergy.[23] He had been a Liberal for some years

[20] *Coventry Herald* 4th June 1869
[21] Ibid. 4th June 1869
[22] Ibid. 4th June 1869
[23] He was a nominator of Fr Pereira when he ran for the Coventry School Board in November 1888 and was present at the meeting when Fr Birt was selected to run for the Board in October 1894. (*Coventry Herald* 16th November 1888, 19th October 1894).

prior to 1876, before becoming regarded a turncoat when he signed his name to a flysheet in 1876.[24] The leaflet attempted to persuade Catholics to vote Conservative in the municipal election; it is mentioned later in relation to a disagreement between Father Moore and Rev Delf (Appendix 11). In 1880 he was once again favouring Liberals and urging Catholics to support that party. A report of a meeting in March 1880, of over 250 'English and Irish Catholic voters', with Pinches as president, stated it was unanimously decided that 'our Irish co-religionists will most efficiently promote the best interest of Ireland, by giving a general support to the Liberal Candidates at this election as the Liberal Party have ever been anxious to sweep away abuses, as proved by their action in the disestablishment of the Irish Church'. The meeting further tried to strengthen Catholic support for the Liberal Party by saying 'Catholics of this city will best promote the true interests of their Church by giving an undivided support…to Liberal Candidates…who belong to that great party which achieved Catholic emancipation, and who are the true champions of Civil and Religious Liberty…'[25] It was the only time the description 'Irish Catholic' was found; it was never used by the local clergy in such an Irish-English context. Given his Catholicity there was probably for Pinches the promotion primarily of Catholic rather than Liberal interests.[26] He may not have been involved in a possible calculated Liberal tactic to get Irish votes by appealing to their ethno-religious fidelity. There was no further report that distinguished between English and Irish Catholics. A week later a meeting of the Catholic electors was held and it was decided that chairman James Pinches and vice-chairman J.P. Beever should meet Sir Henry Jackson and Mr Wills and congratulate them on behalf of the Catholic electors of Coventry. The MPs thanked them for their support for 'the Liberal cause…whose efforts had secured so much of civil and religious liberty throughout the United Kingdom'.[27] While J.P. Beever's mother was Irish, he signed Fr Pereira's address, with Pinches in 1891, with his identity shown as a 'Catholic of Coventry' (Appendix 6).

The 1881 Election

The course of the 1881 election, in which Parnell advised electors that they should not support the Liberal Candidate Kay-Shuttleworth, who had supported Coercion, even

[24] Irish-born T. Hennessey was another who signed
[25] *Coventry Times* 31st March 1880
[26] He appears a principled Catholic, that would likely prioritise Catholic interests. His Catholicity was not in doubt. A son was called William Bernard presumably after Ullathorne, while a daughter was called Charlotte Osburgh, the latter of the two names being that of a female saint the parish church was named after. He also formed part of the Coventry lay representation at St. Chads Cathedral, Birmingham for the for the funeral obsequies of Ullathorne on 26th March 1889 *Coventry Times* 27th March 1889.
[27] *Times* 7th April 1880

if it meant the Conservatives would take the seat, is outlined in Appendix 9.[28] Henry Eaton, Conservative polled 4,011 votes, 443 more than his rival. Reference is made in Appendix 9 to the *Daily Express* reporting the 'Irish party' held a meeting. It is unclear in what sense 'party' was used and who was involved. It may have referred to a meeting of 'Irish and Roman Catholic electors' held in order to promote Kay-Shuttleworth.[29] This was attended by Kay-Shuttleworth, his supporting Liberal politicians and a number of Catholics with a Catholic Young Men's Society background. As in the previous year it is not clear who arranged the meeting but again James Pinches was in attendance and proposed a resolution pledging the meeting of Catholics to do all in its power to secure the return of Kay-Shuttleworth as member for Coventry. The question again raises itself as to Pinches' motives; he did not assist the Parnell strategy to vote Conservative though some years earlier he had been content to persuade voters in a local election to vote Conservative.

The Land League was founded in 1879 and it was only a matter of time before a Branch would form in Coventry.[30] That and the fact of the calling of an Election in 1881 where 'English' Catholic Pinches was steering the support of Irish Catholics towards the Liberals, which in that year was against the wish of Parnell, may have prompted local Irishmen to decide to command their own influence on voters. A branch of the Land League was formed in Coventry on 26th March 1881.

Coventry could be seen as a template of the new strategy where Irish migrants would vote to the advantage of Ireland. Liberals and Tories should henceforth realise that ingratitude would not be forgotten by the Irish. Charles S. Parnell appealed to the Irish electors of Great Britain in July 1881. He wrote in part:

> 'There is scarcely a town in England in which the Irish exiles may not do something to advantage the Irish cause. Recent events have brought out this fact into the strongest relief. Thus at Coventry, with an electorate of some 9,000 voters, a few hundred Irish voters won the seat...Several of the Liberal members who were most ardent in the cause of coercion were men who would not be in Parliament were it not for the Irish electors, and the Liberal party generally ought to have remembered that to put them in power many an Irishman went without his dinner, and gave free half a day's wage on the polling day. The Irish electors may have any day an opportunity of repaying the treacherous ingratitude of several

---

[28] He was eldest son of James Phillips Kay-Shuttleworth who wrote *The Moral and Physical Condition of the Working Classes employed in the Cotton Manufacture in Manchester* in 1832.
[29] *Catholic Herald* 11th March 1881
[30] Perhaps prompted by the formation of a branch in Leicester in February 1881 (*Northampton Mercury* 19th February 1881). Decisons to form branches were being taken around Britain at this time as the following examples show. A Sheffield branch was formed circa October 1880 (*Sheffield Daily Telegraph* 2nd October 1880). In London a branch was opened circa November 1880 (*Dundee Advertiser* 23rd November 1880), in Birmingham circa December 1881(*Birmingham Mail* 23rd January 1882) and in Wolverhampton prior to January 1882 (*The Irishman* 28th January 1882).

Liberal representatives as it deserves and this can only be done by the thorough organisation of the Irish voters.'[31]

The 1885 and 1886 Elections

Following the Redistribution Act of 1884, Coventry would in future elect a single MP; in the general election of 1885 Henry Eaton was elected. He defeated the Liberal, Courtenay Warner, by 261 votes when according to the *Birmingham Daily Post* the Irish vote was cast against him. A letter read to a Liberal party meeting convened in June 1886 to 'consider the political situation' was a sign of change in the air. In it Warner told that he was opposed to Gladstone's Home Rule initiative and as he thought 'the majority of the Liberal Party in Coventry are at variance' with him so he did not intend to go forward again.[32] Their new candidate William Ballantine was defeated by Eaton in 1886 by 405 votes even though the Irish were supposed to have reversed their voted in favour of Ballantine. The paper suggested this was due to the presence of Liberal Unionism with some, who would have previously voted Liberal, now abstaining or voting Conservative.[33]

The 1887 Election

Henry Eaton gave up his seat when he was elevated to the peerage as Baron Cheylesmore in 1887. In the election that followed in July his son Colonel Herbert Eaton narrowly failed to hold the seat losing it to Ballantine, Henry's old rival from 1886. Appendix 9 contains the history of the July 1887 election. The question of Ireland permeated the hustings (Figure 4.2). The Liberals had the difficulty of avoiding being called hypocrites in complaining about Tory coercion, when earlier in 1870 and 1881 Gladstone had introduced similar restraint. Davis saw nationally in the 1880s, as a result of issues relating to Ireland, the arousal of 'deep-seated conservative instincts'.[34] Gladstone's critics saw his Home Rule proposal as threat to the integrity of the Empire.[35] It was too delicate an argument, to convince all in Coventry, that Gladstonian Liberals were the true Unionists, since the Union would be strengthened by goodwill at hand after the delivery of Home Rule.[36] Ballantine won by a mere 16 votes with the Irish National League making much of the national significance of the Coventry result, but particularly the League's contribution to the success. Figure 4.3 illustrates how the result was seen as a victory for Home Rule by the nationalist *Freeman's Journal*.

---

[31] *The Irishman* 2nd July 1881
[32] *Coventry Herald* 18th June 1886
[33] *Birmingham Daily Post* 11th July 1887
[34] Davis, *Irish in Britain 1815-1914*, p. 205
[35] Ibid., p. 215
[36] *Coventry Herald* 8th July 1887

The 1892 Election

From the time of the election of 1887 Ballantine was aware of the danger he faced from the possibility of Liberal Unionists combining with the Tories against him. In July 1887 a private meeting of invited notables had been held to establish a Liberal Unionist organisation.[37] Another private meeting similar in intent was held prior to the 1892 election.[38] Before the election, there were visits by 'heavy-hitters' T.P. O'Connor and Joseph Chamberlain to appeal for support for their respective sides.[39] Fr Rea and R Halpin (Appendix 2) attended to hear the former speak at the 'Great Liberal Demonstration', while Dr Denis McVeagh (Appendix 2) was present to hear the latter at the 'Great Unionist Demonstration'; some further detail is found in Appendix 9.[40]

Ballantine who was referred to as 'Separatist MP Ballantine' remained under pressure in Coventry, but defeated Charles Murray by 143 votes. According to the *Coventry Telegraph* 5th July 1892 the claim was the Liberal Unionists were 300 strong; their alien alliance with the Conservatives had not pulled off a victory. The *Birmingham Daily Post* 5th July 1892 noted on election day that 'Irish Nationalists were in evidence, and had a special committee room of their own in Well Street'. The *Herald* 17th February 1893 reported that Gladstone gave an indication of the Home Rule Bill to the House of Commons. A week later it told of the annual dinner of the Spon Street Ward Liberal association at which T. Hennessey and his neighbour W. Hogan were present (Appendix 2). Since Hennessy was treasurer of the local branch of the Land League in 1881, had attended the Coventry rally against the Irish Coercion Bill in 1887 (Appendix 9, The Land League - 22nd April 1887) and was a signatory to an address of gratitude to Fr Pereira in 1891, his presence represents a crossover between an Irish, Liberal and Catholic outlook.[41]

William Ballantine's address to the meeting provides a useful indication of the progress towards achievement of home rule as would be understood by the Irish in Coventry in the 1890s. He said to applause 'I think the face of things has changed. The Tories depended upon the divisions which they supposed existed in the Liberal party,

---

[37] Ibid. 8th July 1887. Gulson was voted to the chair. In a perusal of the attendees Irish-born J. Deacon (Chapter 5) and Z. Binley (Appendix 2) were noted.
[38] *Coventry Herald* 1st July 1892
[39] *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 22nd June 1892; *Coventry Herald* 24th June 1892
[40] *Midland Daily Telegraph* 25th June 1892.
[41] *Coventry Herald* 24th February 1893. An indication of the later century sensing of class grouping in Coventry was contained in the remarks of the chairman who said Mr Ballantine MP, would 'watch in the interest of the working classes', matters arising in Parliament that affected the welfare of the people. Also O'Day cautions against assuming that the Church saw itself in the same three way, or two way relationship. He pointed out that nationally the Church thoroughly disliked the Liberal call for an end to denominational education. (Alan O'Day, *The English Face of Irish Nationalism*, (Dublin 1977) p. 110).

but to their consternation they found that never was the Liberal party more compact, more welded together in one body, and they found, in regard to the principal measure of the session, the Home Rule Bill the two wings of the Home Rule party equally in harmony with the Liberal party'.[42] His speech, it is suggested, crystallised the most common assessment among those in Coventry who had a desire for Irish self-government, that given the revolutionary route had failed, the only practical way forward, would be through the joint parliamentary efforts of the Liberal and Irish parties. A stoic acceptance of the reality that they would have to support the Liberals, and that self-rule would take years to achieve reduced the impetus of whatever local nationalistic fervour might exist, and thus lessened its usefulness as an associative agent for the Irish community. By 1893 nationally what was making attainment so problematic was not merely the division in the Irish Party and the recalcitrance of the Tory establishment but the Liberal schism of 1886.[43] Locally the *Herald* 7th July 1893 reported that J. Band, Secretary of the Coventry Liberal Unionist Association commented at a meeting on the work of the last eight years. He said it was in the 1892 election that real progress had been made and although they could not succeed without the Conservatives 'they had the balance of power in their hands, and could place who they liked in parliament'. John Gulson then spoke and said the Liberal Unionists were accused of changing their principles, but they had not done so (Appendix 2).

> 'The Liberal Unionists simply refused to be transferred as part of Mr Gladstone's bargain with Mr. Parnell; they refused to be transferred in payment for the eighty votes which he bought from Mr. Parnell. That was the beginning of Liberal Unionism… He was very glad to find that there was a perfect understanding between the Liberal Unionists of Coventry and the Conservative party…[and that] they were willing to amalgamate their principles in opposition to the evil of Mr Gladstone's proposals.'

[42] He was advertent to the earlier allusion to the working man. He said he noticed at the dinner two new magistrates and believed all were delighted at the appointment of a working man. He wished to see more working men acting as charity trustees in Coventry. He thought it was absurd and unjust that in town where the Liberals were in the majority the charities were run by a Tory clique. This observation would have been understood by Coventry Catholics because later in the year there was a public enquiry into the General Charities of Coventry opened by G.S.D. Murray, an Assistant Charity Commissioner. When he invited remarks on the proceedings from the audience, Fr Pereira said as far as he and his co-religionists were concerned, it was very difficult to get a fair share of the charities. 'He had applied time after time, but he generally found that the list of the trustees were full. If politics and religion were to be represented on the trustees he certainly thought Catholics should be represented.'(*Coventry Herald* 17th November 1893).

[43] See T.A. Jenkins, *The Liberal Ascendancy 1830-1886*, (Houndmills, Basingstoke 1994)

The 1895 Election

In the 1895 election the Liberal Unionists voted with the Conservatives and Ballantine lost to Charles Murray by 351 votes.[44] Murray who was seen as a stranger in 1892 had become well known in Coventry as he had come to reside in Allesley. Also the Unionist Party had thoroughly reorganised its organisation while that of the Gladstone Liberals was reputed not to have been in a satisfactory condition.[45] Murray would hold the seat for the next decade. An Irish effort to mobilize for Ballantine in 1895 as happened in 1887 does not appear to have occurred. O'Day stated in general: 'at the opening of the new century many Irish had lost their appetite for nationalist politics and the community as a whole, especially the enlarging British-born segment, was increasingly being absorbed into mainstream social and political attachments'.[46] It must have depressed Irish-minded nationalists in Coventry that the size of 'Coventry Irish vote' could no longer hinder Tory local success and that Liberal Unionist sentiment was strengthening. Further, it must have galled them that the fervour of Birmingham radical, Joseph Chamberlain, had been employed not in the cause of Irish nationalism but to lead Liberal Unionists against Gladstone and to damage the Liberal Party which promised a domestic government for Ireland.

The Coventry Irish vote

Especially in the era of the single seat constituency for Coventry where under a simple majority system a candidate might win by the most slender margin, great play was made of Coventry continuing, or converting from its previous election choice. Much hung on the outcome since, although a local losing party's solid support would emerge again at the next election outing, and even though it might have barely lost the current one, the reality meant that if it lost, it had no practical influence for a period. Consideration was given and credit taken for what had the 'turned' the margin in favour of a candidate. The presumption of the time, which may not have been totally correct, was that the 'Irish vote' served the single issue of Irish national yearning, and in size coincided with the number of Irish voters. It remains uncertain what the size of the 'Coventry Irish vote' was and how it related to the community. The vote was variously reckoned at 50, at 150, and in 1881 at 198, rising to 300 in the year 1887. Such a small

[44] *Huddersfield Chronicle* 20th July 1895 provided the General Election result for 1895: Charles James Murray, Unionist 4,975, Walter Ballantyne, Liberal 4,624, difference 351.
[45] *Birmingham Daily Post* 5th March 1894; Ballantine was reported to have said after his defeat 'every vote that constituted Mr Murray's majority was bought, and he hoped his opponents had to pay dearly for it'. Ballantine left Coventry for the continent. (*Leamington Spa Courier* 20th July 1895).
[46] Alan O'Day, The political organization of the Irish in Britain, 1867-90, in Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989) pp. 187, 188

number could only achieve propaganda importance when there was a slender winning margin that the Irish could claim was due to their tipping the 'balance of power'. If the winner had a winning margin less than the capacity of the 'Irish vote' then the Irish could take credit for assisting the candidate to victory. Establishing the true size of the 'Irish' vote is not straightforward. The number of males, 21 years and above, in the 1881 census, totalled 235 Irishcom of whom 164 were Irish-born. For 1891 the corresponding amounts were 201 and 137.[47] Not included in these totals were Coventry-born, adult males of Irish parentage, who had moved away from their parents but who still may have had a desire to further the welfare of Ireland. Apathy, infirmity and assimilation would reduce numbers of those so voting. All inmates of the workhouse and soldiers in the barracks may not have voted. Some may not have been registered to vote either through lack of concern or alienation, and others who were lodgers may not have established their entitlement to vote due to their likely mobility. Lodgers in order to vote were required to maintain settled status for twelve months and faced an off-putting condition that they had to re-register annually. O'Day concluded that nationally the Irish voted in numbers well below their theoretical strength.[48] It is unlikely then that the census totals truly relate to the number of Irish votes cast. Also a proportion, though probably small, would not have according to the advice of Parnell or Irish nationalists, as the 'Coventry Irish Vote' implied. The behaviour of Catholic Dr McVeagh showed that Irish-born of high social status could be Unionist in outlook.[49] When Parnell advised local Irish electors to vote Tory some may have felt reluctant, and if they were ever going to so do, they would have to hold their noses.

The 'Irish vote' reportedly in Liberal Ballantine's favour was not sufficient to ensure his election in 1886. A year later, based on a winning result for the same home-rule supporting candidate, nationalist proponents would claim the result reflected the primacy of Irish nationalist considerations in voters' minds. The gratitude which Duffy (Appendix 2) expressed to the 'Irish of Coventry' and 'people of Coventry' for their support of Ballantine, may have naively or deliberately, both over-egged the power of the Coventry Irish vote and over-presumed native Coventrians had voted from an Irish perspective. Ballantine won by only 16 votes which was forgotten in a 'winner takes all'

[47] The 1881 figures were reduced by 2 to take account of visiting travellers while those of 1891 were reduced by 1 to account of a visitor.
[48] O'Day, *English Face of Irish Nationalism*, p. 111
[49] References to McVeagh say he was a Unionist. However it is not clear whether he was a Tory or a Liberal Unionist. This is because the term Unionist was applied to members of both parties in Coventry newspapers. The Liberals felt the Tories called themselves Unionist for the purpose of acting as a decoy for the Liberal Unionists. (*Coventry Herald* 8th July 1892).

scenario, so his attitude to Irish affairs may not have been as widely shared locally as the words 'people of Coventry' may imply.

It is to be noted that the issue of Home Rule was treated in Coventry as a topic of real concern to all Coventry men and not solely pitched at 'Irish' voters, who were in any case assumed to be faithful followers of the Liberals after 1886. From what could be detected, few Irish became Liberal Unionists or were Conservatives either, with the exception of Dr McVeagh.

However, while Irish matters did feature prominently in the political realm, most 'people of Coventry' would have made their voting decision on more than the issue of Irish self-determination and would likely have chosen a candidate whose personality they liked and whose domestic manifesto they agreed with. These local considerations were significant in 1887, where voters' distaste for Colonel Herbert Eaton's perceived sense of entitlement to his Tory father's vacated seat might have outweighed their distaste for the Irish home-rule stance of Ballantine. The issue of home-rule was prominent in the election addresses of candidates in 1892 but local National League lobbyists did not appear to have centre-stage participation in the contest campaign. While they asked for Irishmen to support Liberal Ballantine, in overall terms they appeared along with the Anti-Vaccinators, the Fair Traders, and the Trades Council as just another group seeking support for their chosen candidate.[50]

The strength of the vote in furthering the Irish cause may not have been as powerful as touted. O'Day argued that the Irish vote in Britain never lived up to the expectation of nationalists and was greatly overrated.[51] Coventry's role in the greater scheme of Irish advancement was light; it is notable that Parnell one of the colossi of Irish politics never publicly visited the city.[52]

Party politics, may have acted as a cohesive medium for local Irish with an interest in it. Elections provided junctures when local Irish had the opportunity to discuss what attitudes they shared, or felt they should hold in common, about the treatment of Ireland. That apart, the occasionality of polling, the uncertain effectiveness of voting for 'English' parties in the matter of Irish self-determination, scepticism on relevance of Westminster politics to migrant local viability and the dispiriting divisive emergence of Liberal Unionism, must also have lessened Irish political engrossment.

---

[50] *Coventry Herald* 8th July 1892

[51] O'Day, The political organization of the Irish in Britain, pp. 185, 186

[52] O'Connell did address a meeting in the city but the fact that Coventry was a staging point on the Liverpool to London coach run may have been an unacknowledged factor in his decision to sojourn in the locality.

The 'Coventry Irish Vote' did not supply the community with the cohesion or force it implied.

Irish nationalist local activity

Land League and National League[53]

In 1880 St. Patrick's Day was celebrated by capacity-packed concert in the Corn Exchange with the proceeds given to the Irish Distress Fund.[54] The great and good of Coventry had come to support the alleviation of distress. Concert patrons included the Mayor, the four candidates for the city, Dr McVeagh, and other influential gentlemen. The Coventry Handbell Ringers, The Rifle Volunteer Band in full dress uniform and a number of singers including Dr McVeagh entertained.[55]

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 1st May 1880 carried a report issued from Coventry, which had a cordial tinge tailored to the paper's readership, complimenting the warm hand of friendship extended by their English brethren to the Irish residents who organised the concert. It stated: 'Well may our ancient city feel proud to record in years to come the unity that existed in furthering the cause … [of ending famine]'. It revealed that the Messrs Hennessey, McDonnell and O'Donnell were the deputation from the Irish Distress Committee that gave the proceeds of £88. 5s. 8d. to the [Coventry] Lord Mayor for transmission to Dublin. These three men were also the founders of the Coventry Branch of the Irish Land League in March 1881.[56] A letter shows the organising of the concert was a proto-activity of the Land League (Appendix 9, 18th July 1885). Though an isolated occurrence, the concert has an important significance in indicating that there was a place in the social conscience of the city burghers for Ireland and its concert organising compatriots. It was a civility that might without the exposure of the concert otherwise remain undetected in the overall swirl of negativity on matters Irish. However public-spirited concern must have been blighted by news of the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Thomas Burke in the Phoenix Park in Dublin. It filled Coventry with gloom according to the *Herald* 12th May 1882.

---

[53] MacRaild tell that 'in 1883 the Land League gave way to the National League'. The Land League had been closely associated with Fenian operators, such as Davitt…and the change of name symbolized a new constitutional turn and cooperation between Davitt and Parnell. (MacRaild, *Irish Migrants 1750-1922*, pp. 144,145).

[54] A meeting of Coventry Council had resolved on 27th January 1880 that a subscription list be opened in the city in answer to the appeal of the Lord Mayor of Dublin for the relief of distress in Ireland. The Mayor of Coventry who set up the appeal by placing subscription lists at the banks, in a remark reported on 11th February said the response had not been quite so liberal as he would have liked or as he expected. (*Coventry Times* 4th and 11th February 1880).

[55] *Coventry Times* 24th March 1880

[56] *Dublin Weekly Nation* 9th April 1881

> 'The demand for the daily papers was far in excess of supply, and the reading rooms at the Free Library and the various clubs were crowded to excess. A special edition of the *Herald* had a large and rapid sale.'

The Liberal Association and the Conservative Association held emergency meetings and passed resolutions abhorring the crime. During the time of the funeral, shops in the city closed while the bells of St. Michael's tolled for an hour. At a meeting of the City Council the Mayor in moving a proposal expressing horror at the Dublin murders remarked that never in memory was such closure seen in Coventry.[57] Though these murders happened beyond Coventry, given the local reaction, it still must have been an uneasy period for those of its local Land League branch members. A branch meeting was held at which the murders were denounced. It would be 17 months later before the next meeting would appear to be held at which the Parnell Testimonial Fund was raised. The list (Figure 4.4) provides a keen sense of who contemporaries saw as their 'Irish' community.

During the 1880s League activities represented what may be described as the 'cutting edge' of nationalism and are outlined in detail in Appendix 9. At their first meeting in March 1881 they urged Irish people to 'unite' which would have had a cohesive effect on the Irish. They saw themselves as 'Coventry Irishmen'. By 1885 the branch had become dormant, but its secretary P. McDonnell (Appendix 2) wrote a most informative letter mentioned above and shown in Appendix 9 that provided an assessment of: the state of the branch, what influenced the local Irish, and the distance kept from it by the clergy. His nationalist outlook assumed those of Irish origin had a 'duty' to interest themselves in promoting Ireland's political affairs. That he did not detect this sufficiently (within his own keen standards) in Coventry caused a certain frustration to enter his evaluation. The underlying story in his letter reveals there was a lack of everyday obligation to Irish political affairs among the Irish in Coventry. It shows the Irish felt their interests were now being catered for by indigenous newspapers. If an Irish common purpose was sought out, in the degree of a drawing together around patriotic issues, it would now need the conscious reading of Irish newspapers or visits from speakers to drum up shared feeling. The letter was written in 1885 before Gladstone's change of heart. The stance of the local clergy towards Irish nationalism was seen as unsupportive – even though two priests had Irish parentage.[58]

The strength of the League's feelings, found in a resolution passed at its meeting in April 1887 is apparent:

---

[57] *Coventry Herald* 12th May and 19th May 1882

[58] Perhaps this refers to Fr Rea and Fr McCabe. The latter may have been in Coventry in 1885.

> 'That we, the Irishmen of Coventry, indignantly protest against the unnecessary and cowardly Coercion Bill which the Government in their savage hate for the Irish are directing against the leaders of the people who have the courage to stand up in defence of the national aspirations of the Irish race.'[59]

In August 1889 it met to hear John Denvir, the National League general organiser, impress on them the necessity to register Irish voters.[60] A year later it met to hear the same message from another visitor Joseph Nolan MP for North Louth.[61] Meetings now seemed to occur less frequently and are only found mentioned in the Coventry press around the time of parliamentary elections when they encouraged Irishmen to register and vote. The departure of P. McDonnell, who had published details of meetings during the 1880s may account for the absence of knowledge of local League activity that may have taken place, but it is more likely that the calling of meetings was now on an infrequent and ad hoc basis. Members of the branch may have gathered on election day in 1892 as it was said 'Irish Nationalists were in evidence, and had a special committee room of their own in Well Street'.[62]

At the Land League's enthusiastic meeting in February back in 1882, in the Wagon & Horses, John Killen was the pub-licensee, but by 1901 he was in the workhouse. James Duffy its secretary in 1882 was living in London in 1901, while John O'Donnell its then chairman could not be traced. P. McDonnell who was president or secretary of the branch on many occasions from 1881 had returned to Ireland in the later 1880s. The Land League appeared to have had a competent committee and within its own terms an inaugural membership of 60 may have been pleasing. Hickman pointed out that there is a difference between ethnic politics and ethnic consciousness. While the League helped to raise general ethnic awareness it did not generate more widespread activism and ensuing cohesion. After the initial flourish of activity, enthusiasm diminished and what remained was a clique of 'point of reference' 'patriotic' Irishmen in the city, e.g. to meet National League organisers on their occasional city visits.[63] The bulk of its membership was confined to cordwainers, labourers and watchfinishers; its ability to reach a wider social spectrum may have been limited by the holding of some of its meetings in public houses. Its activities were not reported in local newspapers and were furnished only to Dublin based newspapers. The Phoenix Park murders shocked Coventrians; thus identification with local active nationalist promotion that possessed a

---

[59] *Dublin Weekly Nation* 16th April 1887
[60] *Coventry Times* 14th August 1889
[61] *Coventry Herald* 29th August 1890
[62] *Birmingham Daily Post* 5th July 1892
[63] There appears to have been a temporary revival of interest in August/September 1885.

sharpish edge may have not been widely popular among those with a migrant background. The National League's assistance to the Liberal party after Gladstone's turnabout on home-rule dulled its own importance, while the Church's sufferance of the Liberal home-rule path gave the middle-classes an opportunity to now express their views respectably.

The *Herald* 22nd April 1887 reported that an open air demonstration against the Irish Coercion Bill was attended by more than one thousand, when held in Pool Meadow, under the auspices of the Liberal Association. Its president Joseph Cash was in the chair, and attendees listed were MPs, Reverends, Councillors, local notables, T. Hennessey and W. McGowran. Present too was Fr Rea and Fr McCabe from St. Osburg's. It intrigues as to the native and Irish congregational balance of that assembly, and indeed if the gathering was actually of the size mentioned. But in the city matrix of local National League activists, Liberals and Catholic Church members, it appeared the Liberals had come to represent the forward reasoning of many Irish. Pelling observed the ordinary working-class population spent little time on the niceties of religious doctrine as it was too preoccupied with the needs of day-to-day living. A similar preoccupation by the Irish working-class may have limited its involvement in pursuing nationalist concerns.[64] Their distraction from Irish designs can be detected in P. McDonnell's letter, where he referred to the popularity among his countrymen of 'rags' that on them acted as incorporating agents of British culture.[65] The wider second and third generations of Irish would appear to express their understanding of commonality, under indirect Catholic auspices, through activity in the schoolroom at St. Osburg's.

4.2 Catholicism

The standing of Catholicism nationally has attracted the scholarly attention of Norman, Wolffe, Paz and Bossy.[66] They describe a national antagonism that was according to O'Day 'deeply ingrained' and more evident at particular times and in certain places.[67] It attributed to the Catholic Church the identity of Other. Coupled with a long held despisal of its dogma there was in the nineteenth century a new resentment at its expansion and at the rather triumphant and self-entitled manner in which it did so. Considered in this section will be the extent of this pervasive antagonism in Coventry and how it affected the confidence and functioning of the local Church. Again,

---

[64] Henry Pelling, *Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain*, (London 1968) p. 19
[65] Busteed, Resistance and Respectability, p. 61
[66] Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England*; Wolffe, *Protestant Crusade in Great Britain*; Paz, *Popular Anti-Catholicism in Mid-Victorian England*; Bossy, *English Catholic Community*; See also: Gilley, English Catholic Attitudes, pp. 100-119; Gilley, Roman Catholicism, pp. 147-167
[67] O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour, p. 31

nationally the Catholic Church had its own doctrinal and organisational aims to advance, which involved, according to Hickman, migrant incorporation and denationalisation.[68] It implemented both distinctness and conformity. The former in separate schooling and marriage arrangements which engendered distinctiveness; the latter through: advocating social discipline, English cultural disposition, loyalty, and silence on Irish nationalist aspirations, which furthered closeness to the host population. The nature of the attitudes and resources of the local mission that gave it confidence to disarm antagonism and to act as an agent of Church policy with the ensuing mix of implications for the Irish are discussed. It will be asked, if for Coventry, Gilley's observation applied that: 'the form of the Irish community in England was simply taken to be the Church'? The number of lapsed Catholics relates to this but more pertinent is cognisance of Herson's caution, on noting the diversity of Irish migrants in Stafford, where identity was a contested and evolving phenomenon, to seeing the Irish and Catholic as interchangeable labels.[69] The aptness of the application to Coventry of Gilley's remark, that while the Church had no interest in so doing, paradoxically it facilitated the preservation of a type of Irish self-identity, is also considered.[70]

Caution is exercised lest conclusions based on the experience of Catholicism in sub-national, high volume Irish settings, may be applied too readily as sufficiently comprehensive to fit Coventry's domestic proceedings. As an example, Gilley cited Fielding's observation that the Catholic Church appeared unable to surmount the English notion that poverty was disgraceful.[71] It is true that the Catholic Church did not appear to conceptualise poverty as a social issue needing remediation, felt the poor brought much of the trouble on themselves with their wayward habits, and spoke against socialism.[72] The Church too showed it had a mind that could concord with affluence by producing, when signalling its power, splendid spectacle at times of dedication of bishops, consecration of churches and celebrations for jubilees of inauguration. However in the day-to-day behaviour of the Benedictines in Coventry, for example, service to the poor was their watchword. The advance of the Coventry Church whether in building projects, or congregational growth, should not be regarded as an inevitable

[68] Hickman, Alternative historiographies, p. 249
[69] Herson, *Divergent paths*, p. 281
[70] Sheridan Gilley, English Catholic Attitudes, p. 103. He stated that the Catholic Church preserved the self-identity of the migrants through their adherence to it, though it had little interest in so doing, and in fact did much through its schools and press, ostensibly designed to maintain Catholicity, to integrate the Irish.
[71] Ibid., p. 105
[72] See Appendix 6 regarding William Ullathorne, *Notes on the Education Question*

and abstract 'corporate' development, but should be credited to the drive and personality of particular priests.

Over the century some external issues found resonance in Coventry while others failed to gain traction. The city shared in the national passion over the merits of Catholic Emancipation (Appendix 10). In 1837 its newspapers reported and featured, in a local contretemp with the Catholic incumbent Thomas Cockshoot, which arose during a public meeting to oppose the introduction of a system of general education that precluded Scripture as its basis (Appendix 8; Figure 4.5). There was also local indignation by Established and Dissenting clerics over the Maynooth Grant affair in 1845 (Appendix 10). The 'Second Spring' is to be seen below in Ullathorne's Coventry, but other oft quoted notable issues, that are represented by the Tractarian controversy, and the restoration of the Hierarchy, though milestones in nineteenth century Catholic advance, passed by Coventry Catholics lightly.[73] It was in summary, to be a century over which the local Catholic Church developed, consolidated and achieved acceptance, particularly in the less splenetic later part of the century, to such a degree that its presence and activities had become accustomed constituents of city landscape and society. Its separate schools and place on the Education Board seemed deceptively ever part of the Coventry tableau. The evidence in Coventry would appear not to concur with O'Day's general assertion that an anti-Catholic mentality 'definitely did not begin to fade round 1870'.[74] However there were still swipes by the *Standard* in the 1870s at what it saw as the pretensions of bishops such that of the Dr Vaughan, Bishop of Salford in 1873 who said among other comments during an address, that 'Protestantism as an intellectual system is already a wreck'.[75] In 1875 the *Standard* referred to Cardinal Manning's position in English society. While he might be a prince of the Church in Catholic countries and might enjoy precedence over the nobility, it punctured the notion that he would receive similar preference in England, saying the noblemen of the House of Lords would 'hardly be disposed to take their places behind a Roman Catholic prelate'. It observed:

> 'Mgr. Manning has availed himself of every opportunity to obtain a place in the upper grades of society in England, and wishes to compel it to recognise his rank in a church which is in England properly speaking, only a Dissenting sect.'[76]

However, locally the Church was forever anchoring itself. In 1877, for example, it shared in the concern for the moral interest of the people, by making common cause

[73] Appendix 10 provides an indication of feeling at street level in 1850
[74] O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour, p. 37
[75] *Coventry Standard* 10th January 1873
[76] Ibid. 23rd April 1875

with other faith leaders, in a memorial to the Mayor regretting the holding of a Godiva Procession at the upcoming Great Fair.[77]

The absence of overt display of Irish communal ethno-cultural identity until 1880, has meant the record of activity and public acceptance of the Catholic Church in Coventry, to which most Irish adhered, is the key information source relied on to convey a sense of Irish common conduct during this period. This record is centred mostly around the experiences of individual rectors.[78] During Daniel O'Connell's visit to Coventry in 1844, the parish priest was in open support of Liberal sponsored appeals for justice in Ireland. The 1850s, 1860s and 1870s were decades with little evidence of recognition by local Catholic clergy that the town's Irish should be referred to under the appellation Irish. Later in the century the Church seemed focused on its own consolidations, with its view of its Irish adherents' prime identity as now Catholic rather than Irish. The Church appeared more relaxed about support for issues relating to Ireland, once a democratic pathway to Irish self-determination was advanced by Gladstone. The failure to recognise the Irish for much of the century - publicly at least until the 1880s - as separately ethnic, was not because the Catholic clergy itself kept a low profile or the opportunity did not present itself to acknowledge the Irish presence. Clerical activity to bond parishioners through social outings, along with representation of the Church in civic matters was visible in the 1860s. Why the Irish were not directly alluded to in any reports, when in fact they would have comprised a solid part of the congregation and were merely left to be surmised as being a constituent of 'the poor' is unclear. When Fr Price, referred to in Appendix 11, visited Dublin to solicit funds in May 1856 for the Raglan Street school development he stated that nearly every Catholic in Coventry was either Irish or of Irish extraction. However it was one thing to promote

---

[77] *Coventry Standard* 25th May 1877. While a number of signatures identified themselves according to their denomination, Fr Moore signed simply as H.E. Moore, Hill Street. Perhaps his discreteness was an attempt to avoid possible, popular ill-will towards Catholics, and reduce the risk of them being singled out, on his disapproval of a Coventry tradition. Of course it may also be argued the location of the Benedictine priory was so well known that everyone would realise this was being referred to, merely on the mention of Hill Street. Dr McVeagh also signed.
According to the *Coventry Herald* 27th September 1872 the same common cause with other clergy had been made in a memorial to the Licensing Committee of the Magistrates of Coventry requesting them to adhere to the shortened hours for the sale of intoxicating liquor outlined in a recent Licensing Act.
H.E. Moore was noted as one of the managers of the Coventry Savings Bank between 1869 and March 1876
(*Coventry Standard* 5th February 1869; *Coventry Times* 1st March 1866)

[78] A helpful point is the city territory was covered by one Catholic mission (with assistance from the Raglan Street school) until 1893. The coincidence of both, for the duration of this investigation, offers an administrative areal integrity which is a promoted feature of this study.

the significance of the Irish presence in Coventry while seeking contributions in Ireland but a different matter to make the same claims in Britain.[79]

This lack of local acknowledgement of the impact of the Catholic Irish may be found in the following considerations. The Coventry clergy may not have relished becoming part of what Samuel referred to as the 'national church of the Irish poor'.[80] Ó Tuathaigh observed that many British Catholics were 'decidedly uncomfortable' to find Irish Catholics, who were different in culture and class, in their midst.[81] The degree of such discomfort in Coventry, or if such unease was shared by the local clergy, is not detectable, but it may have existed. In not acknowledging the Irish, the clergy may not have wished to publicise that a substantial section of the congregation of the new church opened in 1845 was to an extent comprised of poor labouring Irish families, some of whose members were regularly identified in the local papers as fighting, drunken Irish. Again esteem was not offered to the looked-down on 'inhabitants of the slums' (outside of religious reference to the virtuous state of being poor) who were in part Irish. The quoted words were used in a Birmingham newspaper to describe the people in the back streets and courts of Coventry that Colonel Eaton foraged among seeking votes before the parliamentary election in 1887.[82]

The depth of Catholic loyalty to the State was a well-aired topic for much of the century. Suspicion of Rome still existed in 1874. In the *Herald* 25th September of that year under a heading 'English Roman Catholics' it printed an article from the *London Times* that considered the validity of 'the boast of Roman Catholics that they are "Englishmen if you please, but Catholics first".[83] It stated:

> 'when with his eyes open, a man has accepted the principles proclaimed by Roman Catholicism at the present day, he has done much more than accept a new creed; he has in some of the most important matters of life placed himself under the complete control of a priesthood, and has submitted his conscience to a potentate who ostentatiously anathematizes the principles on which the English State has for at least three centuries been founded… It is bad enough that a man's conscience should be the slave of any authority at all, but when that authority is an

[79] *Dublin Weekly Nation* 10th May 1856; *Freemans Journal* 6th May 1856

[80] Raphael Samuel, An Irish Religion, in Raphael Samuel (ed.), *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity, Minorities and Outsiders*, Vol. 2 (London 1989) p. 94

[81] Ó'Tuathaigh, Irish in Britain: problems of integration, pp. 27, 28. He explained:

> 'British Catholics were, by historical circumstances, an ultra-loyal minority, with (at least in England) a leadership drawn from aristocratic and intellectually patrician circles. In their long struggle to win acceptance as full political members of their state, loyalty and discretion (and, of course, tenacity) had been their invaluable weapons. Many of them found it extremely difficult to come to terms with the hordes of Irish Catholics who came among them during the nineteenth century. They found some of the transplanted forms of peasant piety embarrassing.'

[82] *Birmingham Daily Post* 6th July 1887

[83] The *Falkirk Herald* 26th September 1874 titled the piece from the *Times* as 'The Unpatriotic Religion'. The *Coventry Standard* 17th September 1875 reprinted a sharp attack on Cardinal Manning's observations on Rationalism. (See Appendix 10).

> Italian Prelate it is vain for him to claim the sympathies of Englishmen… in becoming a Roman Catholic a man puts something between himself and the national life of the country.'[84]

The local Catholic clergy were aware of the expedience of professing loyalty, as is confirmed by an address, outlined below, made in Coventry 1875 by Bishop Collier. Coventry clergy may have concluded that they should not risk giving any grounds for the charge of disloyalty to be levelled at them. Though priestly loyalty was questioned in terms of allegiance to the Pope in preference to the Crown, it would not have helped their protestations of loyalty by their drawing attention to the fact that part of their congregation was Irish. As a nationality the Irish were not believed to be irrefutably loyal to the Union.

Acknowledgement of the Irish may have been lacking because, unlike understated English devotion of the head, Irish expression of faith was emotional from the heart, and was not seen as the desired archetype deserving recognition.[85] This absence of acknowledgement of the Irish may have been due to what Gilley detected generally as the preferential attitude of the clergy. 'English Catholicism had its own separate agenda, of converting England rather than serving the immigrant Irish'[86]. He elaborated:

> 'There was no guarantee that the disease-stricken and demoralised horde among their hearers would ever become part of the renascent English Catholic Church; indeed they were a sad distraction from the new crusade for the conversion of England, and from the influx of wealthy converts to Rome from the storm-ridden and divided Church of England'.[87]

At a local level this view would involve seeing the Coventrian clergy as wishing to act as a church serving local families who preserved the faith in the city over past decades, and as one that increased its congregation through attracting converts, more so than by a gratuitous influx of Irish. Ullathorne was particularly imbued with the notion of a missionary English church, but that the presence of Irish distracted him from conversions and led to a resentment expressed in ignoring the Irish, seems too harsh especially as the Irish when he was rector of Coventry until 1846 were not yet the needy Famine influx Irish.[88] The attitude of Clarkson his immediate and short-stay successor is untold. The reasons for the failure of Pratt, who followed, to acknowledge the Irish in ethnic terms are unknown.

---

[84] *Coventry Standard* 25th September 1874
[85] Raphael Samuel, The Roman Catholic Church and the Irish Poor, in S. Gilley and R. Swift (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City*, (London 1985) p. 271
[86] Gilley, English Catholic Attitudes, p. 100
[87] Ibid., p. 104
[88] Champ, *William Bernard Ullathorne*, pp. 91-92

It is suggested the main reason for the lack of acknowledgement of the Irish, was that, imbued with the outlook of William Ullathorne, the parish was 'English' in manifestation. He was familiar with the Irish in the Antipodes (a card he played when appealing to an Irish audience) and had visited Ireland prior to his Coventry appointment, but he was an Englishman at heart. The parish's nineteenth century key clergy were English born, although not Ambrose Pereira, but to adapt an Irish epigram 'he was more English than the English themselves'.[89] Ephrem Pratt, Ullathorne's second successor, was like him, also from Yorkshire and there is no evidence he ever even visited Ireland. Benedictine in spirit there was no one in the mould of the secular Rev. T.M. McDonnell resident 1824-1841 at St. Peter's church, Birmingham.[90] St. Osburg's having been opened in advance of the Famine arrivals, did not bear migrant 'ownership', was not dedicated to a saint familiar to people living in Ireland, nor was the building distinctly centred in an Irish locale.[91] It was not a new mission of the type Samuel described in Holy Cross, Liverpool or in Camberwell, using a room or temporary chapel established in the heart of an Irish migrant concentration with their needs a priority.[92] In contrast, the clergy may not have felt it wished to isolate the Irish as a group, thereby giving them a distinctiveness that would need special attention which in consequence might raise the ire, and prejudices of indigenous poor Catholics. There was widespread poverty in the Coventry of the 1860s. The best way forward in the circumstances was too regard all its adherents simply as Catholic, with, naturally, an English understanding of what being Catholic meant. It is also possible that in Coventry by the 1870s the Church may have discerned that being regarded as Irish, outside of St Patrick's Day, was no longer of significance, to many of those of Irish extraction.

Later century acknowledgement of the Irish took a particular form. It did not evade Hickey's notice that the availability of a schoolroom was important in bringing people together in Catholic surroundings.[93] St. Osburg's schoolroom played such a part in hosting entertainment evenings with a genteel Irish flavour later in the century, under the aegis of the Catholic Young Mens' Society, whose composition and endeavours are

---

[89] Fr Ambrose Pereira was born in Calcutta but was educated at Stoneyhurst and Downside.

[90] See Alexander Peach, Poverty, Religion and Prejudice in Nineteenth Century Britain: The Catholic Irish in Birmingham p. 270; Judith F. Champ, Priesthood and Politics in the Nineteenth Century: The Turbulent Career of Thomas McDonnell, *Recusant History*, Vol. 18, (1987) pp. 289-303. According to Champ, McDonnell had no personal knowledge of Ireland in spite of his name. He was deeply admired by Daniel O'Connell. McDonnell was popular among the Irish of the city for his attachment to the Irish cause. His stay in Birmingham was turbulent; his political activities did not meet with the approval of all his fellow clerics who regarded him as a troublemaker.

[91] There were churches named after St Patrick in Leicester, Bradford and Huddersfield.

[92] Samuel, Roman Catholic Church and the Irish Poor, p. 271

[93] John Hickey, *Urban Catholics*, (London 1967) p. 114

related in Appendix 6. Social evenings organised by the Irish Social and Literary Society at the turn into the twentieth century were also convened in the schoolroom. St. Patrick's Day functions which were also held there, usefully linked the Catholic Church, through its saint and bishop, to the sentiment of Irish people when celebrating their ethnicity in a impassioned state.[94] The value of garnering the goodwill of the Irish through facilitating purely cultural events had been recognised by Ullathorne, who in 1869 drew the people away from the defiant nationalists of Birmingham by providing an entertainment on St. Patrick's day.[95]

Church acknowledgement of the Irish was only signified under this cultural embodiment. O'Day noted that the Church refused to be used as a 'vehicle of Irish nationalist politics' or to permit meetings of such a disposition to be held in its schools.[96] The *Herald* 12th December 1873, under a heading 'Dr Vaughan and the Home Rulers' stated:

> 'All Englishmen – and we should think in particular all English Catholics – will heartily approve the conduct of Dr Vaughan, titular Bishop of Salford, in refusing to authorise the use of Roman Catholic school-rooms, within his diocese, for the purpose of Home Rule meetings. To have done otherwise would have proclaimed the Romanist clergy of England, alone among Englishmen of character and education, approved the agitation for a dissolution of the Union which must ere long, dissolve the Empire; to brand the Roman Catholic laity of England with a stigma which they would have keenly felt and bitterly resented; and to associate Roman Catholic doctrine with political disaffection'.

This was a craftily written piece.[97] In pointing out to the church, what would be read into their granting permission to use a classroom, it also gave a veiled warning that the Church must avoid association with protagonists of home rule or risk its loyalty being questioned. In this perspective, where to be seen in any way associated with the political concerns of Irish migrants was to be regarded as promoting them, the local clergy may have concluded that to be deemed giving even mild tribute to 'Irish question' devotees would needlessly raise unwanted suspicions about Coventry Catholic loyalty to all that was English. It is not known if the local classroom was sought or refused but it was never a venue for the local branch of the Land, or National League.[98]

---

[94] An idea of the maximum size of these gatherings is provided by a notice in the *Coventry Herald* 3rd March 1893 which stated that Henry Norbert Birt applied to the city authority for a music license for St. Osburg's School to accommodate 400.
[95] Butler, *Life of Bishop Ullathorne*, p. 144
[96] O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour, p. 39
[97] It is also to be noticed that the piece cunningly flattered the Catholic clergy as being educated Englishmen of character and so were obligated to behave as such.
[98] T.P. O'Connor MP was recorded by the *Tablet* 28th May 1904 stating at a convention that in relation to the availability of Catholic schools, 'he would remind the school managers that most of those schools had

Matters needed deft handling by the Church in the 1860s. The horrified public reaction to the violence of the Fenians meant the Coventry Catholic clergy would not risk the accusation of disloyalty through being seen associating itself with any forceful effort, or indeed any talk of Irish self-rule.[99] Appeals elsewhere, for mercy to be shown to the Fenians sentenced to death, were interpreted by those demanding the punishment as offering sympathy, and such sympathy if gestured could be construed as support. Wilson referred to this labelling as the 'old slur - that associating with Irish nationalism was rubbing shoulders with murderers'.[100] The same was thought of those who attended ceremonies of remembrance for deceased Fenians. In the excoriation by the *Standard* 20th December 1867 of the Fenians, following the Clerkenwell explosion, it did not resist the opportunity to berate the Catholic Church and to introduce the disloyal chestnut of the Gunpowder Plot.[101] It is suggested, if such self-rule sentiment existed among Coventry's Irish, and be it said there is no evidence on the matter before 1880, it was tactically better for the Church to frame it as a passion of Irish in Birmingham or elsewhere, and to pretend it did not exist in Coventry. It could have been wiser for the local Church not to especially seek out the depth of Irish sympathy for self-rule, or to know at what point that sympathy might cross from expressing itself in parliamentary pleading to violence.

A strong Pastoral by Ullathorne condemning the Fenians was read from the altar in Birmingham in January 1869.[102] Its contents, telling of the Church's firm position, may also have been alluded to at Masses in Coventry, which was in his bishopric. A brief paragraph thundered, frightening those who did not obey the law of the State, that they were eternally damned by him which was a terrifying prospect for the age. In it his irritation is palpable that the people would be controlled by other than his Church:

---

been built with Irish money. (Hear, hear.) He thought it was a subject for indignation that schools so built should close their doors when Irishmen wished to gather within their walls to fight for the cause of the Irish people. (Cheers.) He trusted a more enlightened spirit was now reigning in high quarters in the Catholic Church in this country. ('Hear, hear,' and a voice, 'Quite time') He proposed as an amendment: '… that we make an earnest appeal to the head of the Catholic Church in Great Britain to facilitate the use of the Catholic schools for Irish meetings'.

[99] The nature of the linkage that could be made between suspect loyalty and Roman Catholicism is seen in 1868. A deputation from the Orange Lodges in Birmingham met the mayor to offer the services of 300 active lodge members who would act together as a body of special constables. E.T. Burton said 'with respect to the fact of all Englishmen being loyal, he never doubted it, but a large portion of the people had been tainted with Fenianism, and if Fenianism had been confined to Ireland there would be no call for the English Orangemen making a profession of their loyalty. The Fenian ranks were recruited from a particular class of the Queen's subjects; and they were almost to a man recruited from people of the Roman Catholic persuasion'. (*Birmingham Daily Gazette* 14th January 1868).

[100] A.N. Wilson, *The Victorians*, (London 2003) p. 532

[101] A flavour of the chagrin of the *Standard* 20th December 1867 is found in Appendix 10

[102] *Birmingham Daily Post* 6th February 1869

> 'Thus they have not only broken the law, but have induced others to break the law, not only of the State, but also of the Church. They have not only deprived themselves, but they have deprived others also of their right to the sacraments, to the destruction of their soul. And their whole aim and effort is to bring as many souls as they can into the same condition. Knowing also that the Church is the ever watchful adversary of their proceedings, these persons have done their utmost to get the lead of the Irish Catholic people out of the hands of the clergy, and to hold it in their own.'[103]

There may, although it is not obvious, have been some subdued anger by Irish people in Coventry at Ullathorne, in whose diocese Coventry fell, at his sharp dismissal of the Fenian philosophy. Neal remarked that the hangings in Manchester caused great resentment among the general Irish though most had no involvement in politics.[104] It would take fifteen years, until 1884 before the *Dublin Weekly Nation* would report that a Coventry correspondent wrote: 'A few patriotic Irishmen of this city made arrangements with the clergy of St. Osburg's to offer up Masses for the souls of the intrepid three – Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien. – P McDonnell.'[105] In the light of P. McDonnell's letter in 1885, in which he said 'we are short of the sympathy of our local clergy' this request for a Mass of remembrance may have been an attempt to put the clergy on the spot and elicit their feelings on Irish nationalism.[106]

However it was easier at some times more than at others for the Church to appear comfortable in Irish political related settings. This was apparent in the late 1880s when the Church felt itself enjoying more popular respect nationally and was less challenged about its ultimate loyalty. Migrants through their local-born offspring, and time's work of acculturation were providing the church with a growing, locally schooled, family based, regular congregation, and devoted lay functionaries - which was a phenomenon not enjoyed by other denominations. In those years, the significance of the Irish vote gave an uplifted standing to the Irish in Coventry and progress on Home-Rule was now more reassuringly tied to the democratic process. Catholic sponsored social activity with an Irish tinge was now acceptable, as was clerical attendance, like in O'Connell's days, by two local priests at an already mentioned meeting in 1887, which was promoted by

---

[103] *Glasgow Herald* 4th February 1869

[104] Frank Neal, The Irish in Nineteenth century Britain: integrated or assimilated? (Salford 1994) p. 14. http://www.academia.edu/566130/The_Irish_in_19th_Century_Britain-_Integrated_or_Assimilated Accessed 12th December 2017

[105] *Dublin Weekly Nation* 13th December 1884. It is noticable the request came from 'patriotic Irishmen' and not from the 'National League' though in all likelihood the 'patriotic Irishmnen' were League members. The distinctive phrasing that avoided reference to the League may or may not have been deliberate. While there is no written mention in Coventry after 1867 of the Manchester executions it is clear that the incident was still in the minds of Coventry nationalists.

[106] *Dublin Weekly Nation* 18th July 1885. Mention of the executed men as the 'intrepid three' may have been been reserved for the paper's audience with the request to the local clergy more refinely couched.

the Liberals against coercion in Ireland. Given the attendance of Fr Rea and Fr McCabe from St. Osburg's at such a meeting - which appears very much a one-off - the background of these two priests is of interest. Fr Richard Rea was born in Liverpool. His father John was a cooper, who like his mother Winifred was Irish-born.[107] Fr McCabe was also born in Liverpool and it would appear that his grandfather was Alexander McCabe a shoemaker from Ireland.[108]

The Coventry clergy's attitude to Irish self-determination was probably guarded later in the century. In the city, home-rule was a topical issue at election rallies, as was the shock at the violent manner in which some Irish would pursue independence for Ireland. Some of their local parishoners were Unionist in outlook, as was a significant number of the men of influence city-wide, and their opinion had to be respected.[109] The clergy were loyal and acutely conscious of the need to be seen as such, so could not place themselves in a compromising situation, where they could be accused by Unionists of wishing to threaten the unity of the Empire.

It is suggested the clergy believed the best strategy was keep distant from the issue of Irish self-rule. Yet they ministered to a congregation that contained those of Irish heritage whose sympathies could not be totally ignored. The relatively small numbers of Irish in Coventry helped keep the matter locally in a less pressurised perspective. Much of the time, and even during the Fenian excitement elsewhere, it was probably acceptable for the clergy to appear so busy that time was not to be found to entertain Irish national sentiment, or it was a sufficient tactic to appear oblivious to the relevance to clerics of nationalist spirit in a small midland city. Fr Moore, below, stood back from politics, using the stratagem of his knowing he could depend on the maturity of his congregation to make their own judgements. Irish secessionism may have been framed by the clergy as a worthy ideal of the future but that issues of the present time mattered more, and all attention was required for the immediate needs of the poor, the sick and elderly, or the educational needs of the young. By the 1880s it is suggested that the Church had created a coterie of 'Catholic of Coventry' type of Irishman as were

[107] RG9/2698.25.45 ED 5
[108] HO107/555.9.11 ED 4
[109] William Ballantine remarked in 1892 after winning the parliamentary seat for Coventry, that ranged against him was not only 'the Tory party but the Dissentient Liberals, who had banded themselves together in an organised opposition, and who were comprised of men of influence and position and who were a stern and real factor in the city'. (*Coventry Herald* 8th July 1892)

found in the CYMS that did not embarrass the clergy by raising awkward questions with them on the place of Ireland in the Union.[110]

Apart from the disapproval of the Godiva procession in Fr Ullathorne's time, the conspicuous building and steepling of the new church in mid-century, the pursuit of a place on the School Board from 1870, and its advocacy of denominational education, the Church avoided consciously raising local animus. It was happy to proclaim its loyalty to the monarchy.

As the century closed the Catholic Church had became more 'established' and 'settled' and its social interaction with the public more assured. With its own schools it was almost permanently represented on the Coventry Education Board since 1870 and confident Pereira's concern for the proper administration of the Board's remit impressed all and sundry. The irritating questions about loyalty and the authenticity of Church dogma seemed asked less often. The old respect it longed for seemed to be reappearing. At a special service in St. Osburg's in July 1893 where the re-dedication of England to St Peter was marked locally, Fr Birt said in his address that: 'The great distinctions held by the Roman Catholic Church 300 years ago were being restored to them' while Fr Blundell observed such a re-dedication would have been impossible less than a hundred years ago.

> 'Their Protestant fellow-countrymen would have prevented it… The doctrine of the infallibility had not then been declared, and there was some uncertainty about it. Now, happily, higher views of the truth prevailed.'

Many of its flock of Irish extraction would have melted into the working people of the city by this time. In the recent marriages column of the *Times* 4th September 1889 the marriage officiated by Rev A.F.A. Pereira between Albert Pinches and Catherine O'Brien was announced. This married couple, who were randomly chosen for investigation, showed in the 1891 census. Albert was a 27 year old, licensed victualler, at 40 Gilbert Street. The most suitable census match for Catherine O'Brien was the Birmingham-born daughter of Patrick O Brian, a labourer, and his wife Catherine both from Tipperary, who resided in a court off High Street, Birmingham in 1871. Pinches was from an English Catholic family in Coventry and may have been a nephew of recently mentioned James Pinches; the marriage showed that with a common religion second generation Irish could marry English people with ease.[111]

---

[110] Fielding reminded that most Nationalists were Catholics who revered the Catholic Faith. Given this, there was probably a line that Coventry Nationalists would not cross to challenge the local clergy to say where they stood on Irish self-government. (Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, pp. 42, 43).

[111] RG12/2455.61.7 ED 19; RG10/3134.72.15 ED 3; RG11/3018.46.45 ED 33. See also Thomas F. Burke in Appendix 12 for some interesting insights provided by another family selected at random.

It is suggested that in his stylish writing in 1936, Catholic Bishop David Mathew captured Catholic status in the later nineteenth century and his comments below on the majority, inferring improvement and stability, had relevance to Coventry. First addressing the standing of privileged Catholics he said:

> 'A sense of security was induced by the shadow of Arundel, for the Catholic body fully shared in that illusion of social permanence which had gained in English life as the Queen's reign lengthened. The golden contented jubilee of 1887 and the more consciously imperialistic celebrations ten years later enclosed a period of calm. Arundel and Cardiff Castle, Carlton and Allerton brought a suggestion of the Gothic. Memories of a Tennysonian past lingered in the minstrels' galleries, and combined well with the footmen and the silver tea-trays and the formal dinner parties of a leisured present. There were already many Catholics in diplomacy, a considerable number in the services, and none among the new type of defaulting financier.'

He then continued with observations on the majority:

> 'The great mass of the Catholics of the working class were now settled in the manufacturing towns and cities… toiling and not vocal [they] remained like their rich coreligionists in a state of stability… Catholics had benefited by the general improvement in the condition of the workers which was slowly developing…and there was a deep sense of solidarity. A vivid political interest in Home Rule united those of Irish origin and gave them a sympathy with the Liberals… The national prejudice against Popery was powerful throughout the Victorian age and the Catholics were further knit together by the self-sacrifice which was required of them and by their burdens. It was this generation which built so many of the schools. They would never refuse money for the 'chapel'. Housing conditions were now rather better and employment, though badly paid, was constant.'[112]

Perhaps Mathew revealed more than he realized in the double-tiered layout of his conclusion. Church perceptions were influenced by an ingrained English mentality that was riven by class distinction; where one social grouping felt innately superior to a class that it considered beneath it. Further the Church itself was openly hierarchical with lay folk at the base excluded from the cadre by their ignorance of Latin, or bewilderment at Church liturgical ritual. The classist symbolism was apparent when Cardinal Vaughan walked up the aisle from the entrance to the altar on the occasion of the dedication of the St. Mary and St. Benedict church in Raglan Street in November 1893. He walked under a canopy with one corner held up by Lord Braye, with the bearers of the other corners being Edward, Oswald and Bertram, who were members of the affluent, high

[112] David Mathew, *Catholicism in England, 1535-1935. Portrait of a minority: Its Culture and Tradition*, (London 1936) pp. 235-237. His reference is to the church of Our Land and St Philip Neri, Arundel built by the 15th Duke of Norfolk, Henry Fitzalan-Howard, and dedicated in 1873 which Mathew regarded as the 'perfect symbol of grandeur as the nineteenth century understood it'.

society Petre Catholic family living in Whitley Abbey (Appendix 2).[113] There was less obvious but nonetheless just as concrete status distinction elsewhere. Nuns that engaged in domestic service, could be thought of as lesser in standing than teaching nuns, all under the authority of the mother superior who was in turn under the direction of the local priest. With the presence of such social stratification perhaps accompanied by tacit condescension, and where the Irish would have been seen as lowly worshippers, the question raised earlier about why there was an absence of reports of acknowledgement of an Irish involvement in Coventry Catholic affairs may find an explanation in the rigidity of social class hierarchy and interaction.

Hickman wrote of a mid-century national strategy by the Church of 'enhancing the respectability of Catholicism' which was threatened by the 'poverty, unruliness and political inclinations' of the Irish working-class. In order to maintain Church respectability, she saw the Church as keen to bring sobriety and impose consistency in religious practice on the Irish which would not only have the effect of controlling the Irish but also of denationalising them.[114] It is unlikely a deliberate strategy of transformation and incorporation was at work in Coventry but the markers of such an approach happening incidentally were present. Being a Catholic in the eyes of the clergy was the mark of privilege, superior to all other senses of identity. The Church spoke, as it saw it, for those who clung together with an understanding of the primacy of Catholic religious identity. Thus there was a lack of distinct positive reference to the Irish (modified later in the century as noted below). There was also a continuity of English-born rectors and the English-style liturgical ambience. The Church had an intendment of mission, that for some Catholic Irish raised a contradiction whereby their ethno-cultural identity was at risk through maintaining their religious allegiance. The Church's incorporative thrust, even if unintentionally and incidentally applied in the case of Coventry, jarred with the separatist agenda it maintained and enforced by moral pressure on schooling and inter-faith marriage. Nationally, Best saw the Catholic community 'as close and segregated a denomination as any in Britain' with Irish Catholics in England and Wales 'enclosed in their own religious and social world'. He

[113] *Coventry Herald* 24th November 1893. Edward Petre was also a Tory (as indeed was Vaughan). He had appealed in 1892 for Catholics to vote for Conservative Murray. A letter writer to the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 2nd July 1892 was at a loss to explain why Petre would do so given Petre had sat at Murray's election meeting listening to Chamberlain refer to 'the ascendancy of the Irish priests - priests who have abused their high office by denouncing at the altar the men who were politically opposed to them, using the spiritual terrors of their Church in order to secure compliance with their views'. The correspondent writing to what he called 'fellow-Catholics', in referring to Petre as 'an aristocratic Catholic' introduced the notion of class division.

[114] Hickman, *Religion, Class and Identity*, p. 108

spoke of 'a quite deliberate cultivating [of] the sense of separateness'.[115] This was true in Coventry where it insisted on Catholic young being educated separately and its responsibility to build schools to satisfy that requirement.[116] Also, Coventry was in a Catholic bishopric where opposition to mixed marriage remained constant over the century.[117] It created the circumstances where subsequent generations of the Irish-born were at a mental remove from the host population and prioritised their self-identity as Catholic.

For practical reasons the capability of the clergy in Coventry to constrain and socialise the Irish into 'respectability', may not have been as powerful, nor may it have been as active an 'agent of assimilation' as some historians believed to be the intention and function of the Church nationally.[118] The reality was Coventry had at most only two or three monks 'on mission' residing in the priory. Such a low number may have meant their time was fully occupied in simply performing the religious ceremonies required for effectively two parishes. The challenging nature of their work, their health issues and humble monastic disposition may have combined to lessen any enthusiasm for acculturating the Irish. The monks had entered seminaries at a young age, and after years of spiritual development may have been less worldly as a result. Fr Edmund Moore was described in his obituary as 'full of innocence, charity and simplicity…no man had fewer enemies'.[119] Fr Ralph Pratt remarked that 'Amongst the poor, he was a poor man himself'.[120] All the while they had to maintain a steely resolve in the face of

---

[115] Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain 1851-75*, p. 207

[116] Fielding stressed the importance to which the Church attached to existence of Catholics schools since they were seen as means by which Catholic culture could be maintained. (Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 61).

[117] The *Standard* 16th November 1855 reported that Rev. Thomas Tyson told his congregation in Sedgley, that he had received a letter from Bishop Ullathorne forbidding mixed-marriage. Coventry was also in his see. Tyson said (with little spirit of ecumenism) in relation to mixed marriage, he saw in his own congregation:

> 'The baneful effects of it, in consequence of which the children are brought up like heathens…. How dreadful it is for those who troth their faith and home to each other, when they leave their door, one going one way, the other the other way, thinking the one is going to the devil, and the other thinking the other is going to the devil; and so they live on. All Protestants think of is their own gratifications, pleasures, and selfishness, and all that is bad.'

Almost half a century later Ullathorne's successor disapproved of mixed marriage, as strongly if less stridently, than Tyson. The *Herald* 21st October 1904 reported that Edward Ilsley, Catholic Bishop of Birmingham complained on his visitation to Nuneaton, that mixed-marriages were 'one of the chief weaknesses' of the town. He remarked that:

> 'One of the greatest evils of such mixed marriages was the disadvantage under which the children laboured. In such marriages the stronger will prevailed and children were often sent to other than Catholic schools.'

[118] Bossy, *English Catholic Community*, p. 309

[119] *The Downside Review*, Vol. 18, 1899 p. 180

[120] *Coventry Times* 30th April 1862

indirect sniping and condescension from inimical preachers and the *Standard*.[121] They faced tiring duties day after day, including regular visits to the workhouse. Practical projects they undertook, e.g. building a school, must have caused stress and left debts to worry about for years afterwards. Fr Pereira was told by the 'Catholics of Coventry' in an address read at a concert to celebrate his silver jubilee in 1891 that 'a heavy task devolved upon [him] of freeing from debt the church which [he had] striven to make a yet worthier home for God and His children'.[122] The clergy had their own health problems. Fr Pratt died at 73 years, five years after leaving Coventry in 1870. Fr Moore showed signs of consumption as a young man.[123] Fr Richard Rea mentioned above, as attending the rally in 1887 against coercion, had diabetes and died of pneumonia in January 1915 aged 63. He had been in charge of the new St. Mary mission since 1893 and a piece in the *Standard* following his death stated that his years there were of 'unceasing and laborious work for the pastor, who has found it very difficult to keep pace with the demands of his large and ever-growing parish'.[124] His great friend Fr McCabe, who attended the same meeting on coercion, served for some years in Coventry before settling in Wooton Wawen, died a year later, also aged 63. Like Fr Rea who engaged in 'unceasing and laborious work' it was said of Fr Moore that he was pre-occupied with 'religious duties, and…visiting the sick and the poor.[125] The Church through it teachings provided spiritual enrichment and encouraged families to live righteous lives. It also provided school places, and an appropriate ceremony at those life-journey milestones, from birth to burial, and thus gave structure and stability to the lives of the Irish. Within this pastoral context they met the Irish and that was the largely the extent of their support.

---

[121] While 'innocent' in spirit they were learned and capable of defending and representing the position of the Church locally. They had parochial experience; some clerics had served elsewhere, such as Pratt, in Liverpool before arriving in Coventry; others had been assistants in Coventry for some years before becoming rector. The import of the role of assistants in relation to the Irish may not be duly discerned. This is due to their being upstaged by the more often recorded work of the rector, their relatively short stays in Coventry, and the inability in some cases of not being able to find other than their semi-potted biographical details. Two assistants might be mentioned as examples of ones that may have had an appeal to the Irish. Dom Michael Placid Sinnott (1803-1896) was from Co. Wexford and thus had a familiarity with Ireland (Figure 4.16). Dom John Placid O'Brien (1826-1898) born in Liverpool with an Irish name and presumably an Irish background, was described as a 'man of infinite jest and irrepressible gaiety' and who was a fine singer. When he resided in Coventry from 1852-53 his personality may have chimed with the Irish who had a fondness for celebrating.
Ampleforth Journal, Vol. 18, 1895 p115 at
https://archive.org/stream/ampleforthjourna18yorkuoft/ampleforthjourna18yorkuoft_djvu.txt Accessed 12th February 2019
http://www.ourladysparbold.org.uk/about/the-history/priests-and-people/ Accessed 12th February 2019

[122] *Coventry Herald* 29th May 1891

[123] *The Downside Review*, Vol. 18, 1899 p. 178

[124] *Coventry Standard* 15th January 1915

[125] *The Downside Review*, Vol. 18, 1899 p. 179

The Benedictine Mission

Benedictine monks served Coventry in the nineteenth century.[126] The Benedictine temper - largeness of spirit - would also become available to Coventry at diocesan level when William Ullathorne became Bishop of Birmingham within a few years of his departure from Coventry in 1846. The monks that served Coventry were attached to Downside Abbey, Bath; or Douai Abbey, Reading; or Ampleforth Abbey, Yorkshire. From Ullathorne onwards with the exception of Athanasius Clarkson, Coventry was a mission of Downside. While many monks came and went from Coventry notably in the 1890s, three clerics acting as curates or rectors: Fr Pratt 1850-1870, Fr Moore 1859-1891 and Fr Pereira 1870-1884, provided after Fr William Ullathorne 1841-1846 strong parochial continuity. Pratt, Moore and Pereira were resident for long periods which meant they had mature familiarity with the city; and it with them. A number of priests had served as assistant rectors before taking over the reins themselves as shown in Table 4.3. They developed and oversaw the parish infrastructure and set the standing of Catholicism as a denomination to be respected in the city. It would appear little specific consideration was given to the 'Irish' as a ethnic group. Yet they were close in a certain respect to the Irish because the confessional provided the clergy with a unique insight into the deepest thoughts of the Catholic Irish community, albeit of the pious. They followed the Rule of St. Benedict that sought poverty and humility, which would have meant they were on an approachable level to the Irish and attuned to their poverty. Fr Pratt said of himself and Coventry in 1862 that 'he was only a poor man coming from a very poor place'.[127] They were not key characters in the daily lives of the Irish in the sense that they were not recorded as being called on to intervene in Irish rows.[128]

In 1841 William Bernard Ullathorne (1806-1889), a Benedictine monk, became parish priest of Coventry (See Appendix 2).[129] On arrival in Coventry he decided to build a new church. This was to replace the inadequate Church of St. Mary and St. Laurence which had been in use since 1806 and which was catering for a congregation said to have numbered 300-400 in 1838.[130] There appears to be no evidence of any explanation that the congregation might have been lately swelled by pre-Famine Irish

[126] Benedictines could claim an intermittent association with Coventry as far back as 1043 when they occupied the city's first monastery. (Walters, *Story of Coventry*, p. 16).
[127] *Coventry Times* 30th April 1862
[128] There is one instance found where a priest intervened to plead for a parishioner. This was in 1877 when a lad called John Kennedy was before the court for stabbing a boy. Kennedy's aunt said he was in her charge, and he attended St. Osburg's School. Fr Pereira then made a communication to the bench which was inaudible to reporters. The Mayor said it was a serious charge and remanded Kennedy in custody in order to consider what to do with him.
[129] Champ, *William Bernard Ullathorne*, p. 90
[130] Reginald Hugh Kiernan, *The Story of the Archdiocese of Birmingham*, (West Bromwich 1951) p. 28

arrivals and that such increase prompted the provision of a larger church; the impression has been left to linger by Ullathorne that conversions were largely responsible for the increased flock (Table 4.4).[131] Since the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 a more assertive open display of clerical activity and greater priestly self-assurance was to be seen in the Midlands. St. Marys' Church in Derby was completed in 1839. Bishop Thomas Walsh replaced the small church of St. Chad with a cathedral sized building in Birmingham in 1839, while in 1841 Robert Wilson commenced building Nottingham Cathedral; all were designed by Pugin. While these churches, through architecture and decoration, were ostensibly designed to give a heightened experience to worship they were also tangible statements of revival, presence and growth in municipalities. Though not on the scale of the churches designed by Pugin, Ullathorne's plan for St. Osburg's was still considered too large and elaborate for its congregation in which there were 'no respectable people'.[132] Designed by Charles Hansom (1817-1888), Town surveyor of Coventry, in continental Gothic style of the 13th and 14th centuries, the foundation stone was laid in 1843 and the parchment enclosed with it recorded the Catholic congregation of Coventry as 1,000.[133] He raised some funds by 'concentrating on districts where Irish labourers had congregated. They, mindful no doubt of his efforts on behalf of their banished countrymen in the Australian penal settlements, responded with generosity'.[134] He also went around England on begging tours.[135] Perhaps Ullathorne's quietly styled church at the then edge of Coventry did not make a lasting physical overstatement of Catholic self-importance in Coventry that would have stirred the resentment of bigots who were forceful in 1860s Birmingham and Wolverhampton. That is not to say it was an unimposing church; with steeple added in 1854, its solid presence displayed an immutable denotation of Catholicism in Coventry (Figure 4.6). At the laying of the foundation stone for the new church in 1843, at its dedication in 1845 and at Ullathorne's consecration theirin as a bishop in 1846 there was much ceremony. These spectacles reassured the faithful of the confidence of the Hierarchy in the rightful place of Catholicism in local society. Butler tells:

---

[131] See below where Ullathorne referred to Coventrian Catholics in 1865 as 'an English people of converts'.
[132] Butler, *Life of Bishop Ullathorne*, p. 127
[133] Her Religious Children, *Life of Mother Hallahan*, p. 82. According to Champ the reason he did not invite Pugin to design the church was most likely due to cost as he could not risk Pugin's notorious extravagance in the poor conditions of Coventry. (Champ, *William Bernard Ullathorne*, p. 115).
[134] Dom Sebastian Simpson O.S.B, A Centenary Memorial of Saint Osburg's Coventry 1845-1945 (2007) p. 18. http://coventry-catholicdeanery.org.uk/new/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/history-sep-07.pdf Accessed 1st October 2018. This may have been a genial flourish made by Simpson a century later, to suggest Irish labourers contributed with generosity; there is no evidence they did so in Coventry.
[135] Butler, *Life of Bishop Ullathorne*, p. 126

> 'On the following day all the bishops of England assisted at the solemn opening, which was attended by many of the Catholic gentry of that and the neighbouring counties. In the afternoon a great entertainment was given to the bishops and the visitors in the old Catholic Guild Hall, which was filled with guests.'[136]

Catholic development may not have drawn as much criticism as it might have, since it was not uniquely expansionist in Coventry. In the evangelical climate of the decade the Church of England opened St. Peter's church in Hillfields in 1841 and also St. Thomas' church in Albany Road in 1849. The local Established Church may have been concerned more, about the large swathe of population who did not attend church, and the growth of Dissenting congregations at its expense, than Roman Catholicism whose numbers were mainly heightened by poor Irish immigrants.

In 1844, it will be recalled, Ullathorne attended the O'Connell meeting in Coventry. His presence offers an opportunity to: hear his support for the alleviation of injustice in Ireland and who he blamed for it; his standing among Coventry men of affairs and; allowing for the heightened passion of the meeting, his popularity in the city. It was reported that: 'Dr Ullathorne…ascended the platform and was received with great cheering and the waving of handkerchiefs by the ladies in the gallery'. Ullathorne said: 'To imprison such a man, under the idea of destroying his influence would be futile'. Ullathorne adverted to the miserable condition of Ireland which he attributed to 'the injustice and misgovernment of which long it had been a victim'.[137]

This was a period of renewed Church confidence that was referred to in 1852 by Newman as a 'Second Spring'. The *Morning Post* 30th August 1844 reporting on the consecration of the Catholic Cathedral in Nottingham, 41 miles from Coventry, wrote of spectacle of the occasion which seemed eager to recreate a prominence found before the Reformation. An excerpt in Appendix 6 illustrates the confident flaunt; a scaled version of this assertiveness could be seen in Coventry. In 1845 Ullathorne invited Fr Albert Gentili who gave a series of missions throughout Britain, to preach in Coventry. He had already visited Coventry in 1843.[138] Ullathorne arranged for the Gentili mission to occur during the Godiva festival which he felt was profane. Gentili asked those attending the church, to pray that it would rain heavily to spoil the shameful Godiva display. As a counter measure he organised processions, to which crowds thronged each evening, around the church in which a statue of Our Lady was carried while hymns were sung.

---

[136] Ibid., p. 127

[137] *Coventry Herald* 22nd March 1844. At this time O'Connell faced a year in prison having been found guilty in Dublin on conspiracy charges.

[138] The *Herald* 4th August 1843 contained an advertisement confidently placed at the top of the front page that two sermons would be preached by him in Hill Street in aid of the Catholic schools on 13th August.

To the Catholic Irish the presence of a new church offered a comforting sanctuary in which support and a sense of belonging abided; a place where their belief was validated and celebrated. That it was run even for a short time by a priest who had close contact with transported Irish, who had visited Ireland, and was assisted by Margaret Hallahan who had Irish parents would have offered further reassurance. It is known that throughout Ullathorne's life he despised excessive drinking which he saw as a social evil that degraded not only the imbibing person but the family also. He may have preached strongly in Coventry against alcohol abuse and advocated determined self-control. This advocacy of temperance may have been to the benefit of his Irish listeners but it may have also alienated some from attending his church.[139] He preached to large congregations in the evening in the new church, but they were not all Irish. He was receiving converts at the rate of one hundred per annum on his departure from the city.[140] In Ullathorne's 1868 account of earlier life in Coventry he appeared busy in the financing, design, building and dedication of a new church but he elaborated little on his pastoral work from 1842-1846. It is suggested that he was at 36 years, a young, widely travelled, administratively experienced, quietly ambitious priest in a hurry, who in the outlook of the time did not regard the alleviation of poverty as a greater priority than getting a new church built. However even if there was much assistance offered to the Irish and the poor, it is the nature of such pastoral social care that it is done quietly and would not find itself recorded with such attention as might the opening of a new church. Lay organisations such as the St. Vincent Society or the CYMS were creations of the following decade.[141]

He referred to Coventrian Catholics after a return visit to Coventry in 1865 as 'poor people' with 'their simple faith', who were 'an English people of converts, and yet they have the deep Irish faith, together with the English quality of good works'.[142] Heimann reassured that while the mention of simplicity may sound patronising to modern ears 'praise for the piety of the poor was no disparagement, but was meant approvingly, even reverentially'.[143] In Ullathorne's description it is not entirely clear how the the attributes of the congregation related to each other; while he referred to the congregation's 'deep Irish faith' (his only use of the word 'Irish' in a Coventry context)

---

[139]Champ, *William Bernard Ullathorne*, pp. 93-94

[140] Butler, *Life of Bishop Ullathorne*, pp. 128-141

[141] The first meeting of the Brothers of St Vincent de Paul was held on 21st April 1856. (*Souvenir of the Golden Jubilee of St. Osburg's Conference of the Society of St Vincent de Paul*, 17th August 1907).

[142] Butler, *Life of Bishop Ullathorne*, pp. 133-134. 'Simple' has a variety of meanings such as: not involved or complicated; easy to understand; plain; unadorned; unaffected or unpretentious; sincere; of humble condition; ordinary or straightforward.

[143] Mary Heimann, *Catholic Devotion in Victorian England*, (Oxford 1995) p. 160

he seems more interested in upholding its Englishness. He recalled in 1869 that in Coventry he found a:

> 'Good and pious flock…few of them gave me real trouble, and they were so much of one class, the industrious weavers and watchmakers, that they were like one family…It was long a pleasure to me whenever I have gone to Coventry to look from the pulpit on the old faces; but alas! how many of them have disappeared. Those whom death spared have been scattered by the loss of the Coventry trade, after going through years of suffering and destitution…I had the invaluable aid of Mother Margaret, whose influence over the people was a spiritual power that was always growing. My four years and a half at Coventry were the happiest and most fruitful years of my life and I left it with extreme regret.'[144]

The absence of any gesture of acknowledgement of Irish involvement in his old parish may have been due to a belief that Irish members of the congregation were increasingly fusing in matters religious with the English 'majority'. The omission may have arisen because he did not wish to single the Irish out for mention and risk either embarrassing them or the Church. He was certainly aware of the Midland Irish and identified them as a group in 1857 when he wrote *Notes on the Education Question* considered in Appendix 6.[145] Then he did so and saw them as the desperate poor. Perhaps as time passed it was no longer mannerly to mention the Irish, as in the act of doing so, the poverty struck origins of many Irish parishioners would be recalled. That it was these lowly migrants that gave numerical strength to the Church was not something to be wilfully exposed to public attention. The migrants with a belief, which he saw as a 'simple faith' at a remove from doctrinal, liturgical and theological considerations, garnered less prestige than high profile conversions of intellectuals, including that of John Henry Newman in 1845, who resided in Birmingham. Ullathorne wrote his autobiographical draft in the aftermath of the Murphy Riots and Fenian excitements. Birmingham was a centre of Fenianism with the guns provided to the Manchester Martyrs sourced there. In his Advent pastoral of 1868 he strongly condemned Fenianism publicly, regarding it as a secret society whose members were banned by the Church from taking the sacraments. He deeply upset many Irish who had sympathies with the movement and whose feelings were raw after the executions of the Manchester Martyrs.[146] In this light he may have believed it would appear divisive of him to unnecessarily identify parishioners as Irish or English in his autobiography. Perhaps the simplest explanation is that he overlooked the Irish because they had not yet arrived in Coventry in Famine related numbers before his ministry ended there in 1846. Norman's

[144] Ullathorne, *From cabin-boy to archbishop*, pp. 220-221
[145] William Ullathorne, *Notes on the Education Question*, (London 1857)
[146] Butler, *Life of Bishop Ullathorne*, pp. 141-144

succinct sentence may offer the fullest explanation of his perception of the Irish when he said of Ullathorne: 'He was very English'.[147]

Ullathorne's consecration in St. Osburg's as a bishop in June 1846 provided another display of Catholic confidence. He left the city during the same month.[148] His departure then, in terms of this study, is to be regretted because if he had remained in Coventry during those years of trauma he may have written more expansively about the local Irish.

Gilley points out the migrants 'hardly figure in English nineteenth-century ecclesiastical archives as the Irish. They are usually the poor'.[149] That the numerical boost of the Irish migrants to Church buoyancy was not prominently credited is seen in Kiernan's account of the Archdiocese of Birmingham (that included Coventry) where there is but a fleeting remark in one sentence about Irish immigrants contributing along with conversions to a growth in numbers.[150] This phenomenon was noted by Murphy who observed a curious reluctance to acknowledge the Irish influence on the revival of the English church. He gave as an example that in *Nottingham Cathedral: a History of Catholic Nottingham* the author Canon Cummins devoted a mere eight lines to the Irish.[151]

The strength of Church attendance in relation to the size of the Irish-born in Coventry, and its comparison with that found in a selection of other municipalities is shown in Table 4.5.[152] The comparison is merely indicative of the Catholic/Irish Catholic balance as it does not take account of local-born children of the Irish, those Catholic Irish who did not make public worship on the day, and Non-Catholic Irish. It is to be noticed the Birmingham morning attendance was a little over one third of the Irish-born in that city, while the attendance in Coventry was substantially higher as a percentage of its Irish-born. Compared to Leicester, Nottingham and York where the total Catholic worship attendance as a percentage of Irish-born was approximately 70.0% the Coventry percentage at 129.0% appears high. It is to be observed that the

---

[147] Edward Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century*, (Oxford 1984) p. 161

[148] The *Coventry Herald* 10th September 1847 recorded that Ullathorne had returned to give two sermons in St. Osburg's on the previous Sunday. The collections taken afterwards on behalf of the schools had raised over £22.

[149] Gilley, English Catholic Attitudes, p. 105

[150] Kiernan, Story of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, p. 42

[151] Murphy, Irish in Nottingham, p. 87

[152] Appendix 6 provides comment on the Table and compares Catholic attendance in Coventry with that of other denominations.

rounded nature of the Fr Pratt's Coventry figures when compared with the selection above suggest that it may have been an estimate and that it was too liberal.[153]

The long presence of Ralph Ephram Pratt (1802-1875) in the city allowed him to become recognised as a stable part of Coventry society which brought increased acceptance for the Church he represented in the polite and influential section of that society. He attended many civic functions over the years and his accustomed presence of showing Catholic interest and involvement in city life helped to create mutual trust between the Catholic Church and the city populace. It remains a paradox that over the years while a newspaper in one issue might rail against the believed deviancy of the Catholic Church, in another issue its representation in Coventry by Fr Pratt, if referred to, would be in kindly terms. The *Standard* 21st June 1867 recorded that Fr Pratt was among the county grandees and municipal notables of Coventry and nearby towns, at an elaborate, ceremonial civic opening of the Coventry Industrial and Art Exhibition.[154] Following a luncheon in the Corn Exchange, Earl Granville took the opportunity, while responding to a toast to his health, to include in his laudatory remarks about Coventry the following observation which drew loud applause:

> 'What I have seen here tonight goes to my very heart, for I consider it forms one of the most touching examples I remember of the perfect good feeling between the clergymen of that Church to which I belong and the clergy of other Protestant churches dissenting from that Episcopal Church, and at the same time a Roman Catholic priest respected and beloved by you all.'[155]

This remark by Lord Granville was more than throwaway bonhomie by one of the Liberal elite. It was made in 1867, seventeen years after Pratt's arrival in Coventry and three years before he retired to Downside. Over the years he had made his presence known in a variety of social contexts. The *Standard* 5th October 1855 reported that the annual meeting of the Coventry Institute was held in St. Mary's Hall, attended by 'many of most influential citizens'. The Mayor, Sir Joseph Paxton MP, the High Sheriff of the County, and a number of clergymen, aldermen and names synonymous with civic affairs and local business, such as Bray, Caldicott, Gulson, Herbert, Pears, Ratcliff, Soden, and Vale comprised the list of attendees. Fr Pratt was called to move one of the resolutions. That he was asked, and the relaxed, cultivated, modest manner in which he moved the motion, indicated how socially acceptable and comfortable he was in the presence of these city gentlemen. A list of occasions when Pratt was seen in a

---

[153] The Study Area Irish-born figure was 894 and if this was applied it would reduce the 129% to 100%. See Appendix 6 (3) for returns of other denominations at worship on 30th March 1851.
[154] Concurrent with this ceremony, riots were occurring in Birmingham; the nature of the reference to the riots on the occasion of the ceremony was noted earlier.
[155] *Standard* 21st June 1867

complimentary light and deemed part of the fabric of the city is found in Appendix 6 while some personal details are found in Appendix 2. He left Coventry in 1870 and when he died in 1875 it was said of him:

> 'He was well known and universally beloved and respected, not only by the members of the church to which he belonged, but by the inhabitants of the city generally.'[156]

Thomas Cuthbert Smith (1815-1884) took the rectorship on the departure of Pratt but shortly after in 1872 he was succeeded by Henry Edmund Moore (1824-99). He had arrived as an assistant many years earlier in 1859 and remained as rector until 1891. Fr Antonio Francisco Pereira (1839-1923) came as an assistant to Coventry in 1870 where he remained, apart from a five year break in the 1880s, for twenty-six years (Appendix 2 for details on Smith, Moore and Pereira). He was rector for the final five years before his departure in 1896. The *Herald* 29th May 1891 reported a presentation to the Rev. Fr Pereira by the Catholics of Coventry to mark the 25th anniversary of his ordination. The address was given by Dr McVeagh who told Fr Pereira of the 'esteem, gratitude, and affection... won by your zealous, untiring, and self-sacrificing labours among your flock during the last 25 years'.[157] The address reminded Fr Pereira of his work in collecting funds for the erection of schools in Hill Street, his renovation of St. Osburg's, his service as a twice elected member of the School board, and that he was 'a bold and unflinching champion of the rights of denominational education whenever these have been assailed by the supporters of unsectarian (sic) schools'.[158] The census provides an indication of the background of the men who signed the address as the 'Catholics of Coventry' (Appendix 6). There was no 'Irish' reference in the anniversary address. The Irish influence among these 'active' or lay 'executive' Catholics, if defined by birthplace appeared moderate. While some, such as Doran or Beever may have possessed an Irish background, only four signatories were Irish-born, and at an average age of 60.2 years, older too than the average age of the 23 signatories which was 45.2 years. In making this presentation, they would have defined themselves primarily as, Catholics associating with other Catholics in common endeavour, rather than as part of an Irish scheme. As this listing of 'Catholics of Coventry' suggests, these Irish by background or birth, lacked numerical heft, within the prominent Catholic circle, to be able should they ever imagine as necessary, to drive a proposal particularly relevant to the Irish for espousal by the Catholic fraternity. In reality, only Denis McVeagh's social

---

[156] *Coventry Herald* 11th June 1875
[157] Ibid. 29th May 1891
[158] Ibid. 29th May 1891

esteem and mature years would have given him the stature to sway opinion in the direction of his view. Apart from Thomas Hennessey, who was a committee member of the Land League, the remainder on the list were not mentioned over the years as directly involved in the League.[159] Only Thomas Hennessey and J. Randle were listed as attending the Liberal promoted, Irish Coercion Bill, meeting in Pool Meadow on 16th April 1887.[160]

The Education Act of 1870 led to the setting up of the Coventry School Board. The *Herald* 2nd December 1870 reported on the triennial election of the eleven members of the Coventry School Board. Topping the poll was John Gulson, Liberal Association with 4,162 votes, followed by William Lynes, Conservative with 3,854 votes and then Edward Petre who represented the 'Roman Catholic element' with 3,700 votes. The paper referred to him as a cultured gentleman whose 'co-religionists could have found no better exponent of their principles'. In the *Herald* 16th December 1870, Rev E.H. Delf, a Dissenting minister in West Orchard Chapel gave a discourse on the 'The Future Education of Coventry'. In it he complained that in Coventry the cumulative voting system used to elect the School Board had given an unfair advantage to minorities such as English Roman Catholics. He saw them in 'perfect drill' and moving 'as one man in obedience to their priest'. Delf questioned why Roman Catholics wanted to be represented on the School Board and wondered could the reason be to prevent the Bible being used in supported schools, and -

> '…to watch the roll of children's names lest one poor child, within ten degrees of relationship to a Roman Catholic, should be swept out of the gutter into the Godless precincts of a rate-aided school'.[161]

Petre, to most people's surprise, lost his place on the Board by a mere fifteen votes in 1873.[162] That this happened seemed a shock to all and the Catholic feeling may have been that a group comprising all, or any of the: 'Liberals, Radicals, Dissenters led by Delf' were to blame. That Liberalism which was friendly to Ireland could include under its banner Radicals and Dissenters not disposed to Catholic Church stipulations must have upset Irish Catholics. (Appendix 11). Fr Moore decided to present himself for election in 1876; again Delf was to the forefront with bitter complaint at Moore's move which he articulated in an address to his congregation in West Orchard.[163] Apart from

---

[159] The William Ryan mentioned in the address and the W. Ryan who was an official of the Land League were not references to the same person.
[160] *Coventry Herald* 22nd April 1887
[161] Ibid. 22nd April 1887
[162] Ibid. 5th December 1873
[163] Ibid. 24th November 1876. Moore's letter to the *Herald* seeking votes was a model of tactfulness and showed a desire to avoid causing any controversy. In the adjoining column an address of E.H. Delf on the

the one Catholic electee, the Board, comprised of 11 members, reflected party political division, usually 5 Conservatives and 5 Liberals; with the former seen as Denominational and the latter Non-Denominational in outlook. In general, with the strong exception of Delf, all seemed content with the compromise arrangement which permitted Catholics having one seat of the Board.

H.E. Moore wrote a letter in response to Delf's bitter address.[164] While the letter contained typical politeness - that he bore no ill-will towards Delf, or wished to enter controversy - it then went on to take Delf firmly to task. The letter showed that the Priory clergy were quite erudite, humble but confident in their own principles, and were prepared to take issue with those disparaging the Church. It usefully revealed Moore's political stance, his attitude to the leadership of Catholics - and by extension Catholic Irish in the decade after the Fenian ventures. He asked in his letter whether Mr. Delf was justified:

> '…in hooking into the question of the Coventry School Board election attacks against Catholics in general. Is not this, I ask, a sad instance of illiberality on the part of a Nonconformist Liberal'.

Moore continued:

> 'Just at present the Catholics of Coventry are very much divided in their political opinion as to whether they should be Liberals or Conservatives. Let me tell Mr Delf, and all such Liberals as stand by him, that, if they wish to make every Catholic in Coventry abandon the Liberal ranks for the Conservatives, they are just doing that which will bring about the desired end. I am not myself one who takes an active part in politics; I leave the members of our congregation quite to themselves and their own judgement in these matters; but I would wish all Liberals to remember this, that, in every question we Catholics cling firmly together, and thereon willingly sink all political differences. Mr. Delf's address, I know has justly roused a feeling of bitter indignation in the breasts of our people. It was said at the last municipal election, in a fly sheet signed by four members of our congregation (of which I knew nothing before publication), that Catholics have nothing to expect from Dissenters: and, indeed, are we not, now at least, much inclined to believe the truth of that assertion? Have we not, in Mr. Delf's effusion, some proof of it.'[165]

Education Question was published which showed deep resentment at the prospect of Fr Moore joining the Board. See Appendix 11. It is difficult to assess how current, influential or representative were Delf's opinions, whether he was seen by contemporaries as speaking the mind, of everyman, or just, of a lone polemical preacher who was of the angry view that the Catholic Church was being advantaged by the State to the detriment of Nonconformists. Delf himself was well-known and reportedly popular, possessing a 'brusque manner' and a 'strongly marked character'. It should be stressed that no reference could be found to him making any comment on the Irish. In fact he was around the platform with other notables in St. Mary's Hall in March 1844 when O'Connell spoke about redressing Irish grievances. (*Birmingham Mail* 20th May 1882; *Coventry Herald* 26th May 1882).

[164] *Coventry Herald* 1st December 1876

[165] Appendix 11 explains the reference to a flysheet. *Coventry Herald* 1st December 1876

Delf also complained that Protestant children attended Catholic schools because education was offered by them at a cheaper rate while Catholic children did not attend Coventry day schools. It was not Fr Moore but Fr Pereira who wrote a strong reply on 7th December 1876.[166] He said he visited three established schools in Coventry and found Catholics attended two of them, and so, chided Delf for not checking the facts, for rushing to print and making 'slap-dash assertions.' He challenged the ageing Delf to provide to the public, information on the fees in Delf's school and in an overly direct fashion responded:

> 'Of course it would be unreasonable in us to expect that same amount of infallibility from the rev gentleman when writing in a newspaper that we look for from him when speaking 'ex-cathedra' at West orchard Chapel on the "Present Aspects of the Education Question." May I, however, be allowed to suggest to the rev gentleman to spend half-an-hour in meditation on that commandment of God which I believe is as equally binding on him as on the rest of the Christian world: "Thou shal't not bear false witness against thy neighbour."'

Delf replied on 13th December 1876 that he was delighted the doctrine of infallibility had led to 'the present complications of that church in nearly all the countries on the continent and will ultimately lead to its ruin'. He referred to 'good old Fr Pratt whose removal from Coventry I never could understand, because his great liberality helped rather than hindered the interests of Roman Catholicism'.[167] Fr Moore continued without contest in 1879 and 1882 on the Board until it went to election in 1885 when Fr Pereira took Moore's place. The confidence of Pereira, and the increased standing and influence of him and the Church he represented, that was displayed at local official level is shown in March 1886 when the headmaster of Spon Street Boy's School, J. Stringer was the subject of a complaint made to the Board by Pereira. Stringer was ordered by the Board to attend its next meeting to explain the allegations made by Pereira of rudeness towards him and for having marked the registers fifteen minutes late. At the next meeting, Stringer sent a letter profusely apologising for his discourtesy towards Pereira and promising to remedy the problem of untimely register marking. Pereira backed off saying that he would not press the matter further and that Stringer had been publicly 'rapped on the knuckles, figuratively speaking'. He made some ameliorating remarks that they were all liable to make mistakes but that it was important that the regulations laid down for marking the registers be strictly adhered to. The Board adopted Pereira's proposition that Stringer's explanation and apology be accepted.[168]

---

[166] *Coventry Herald* 8th December 1876
[167] Ibid. 13th December 1876
[168] *Coventry Herald* 5th March 1886; 2nd April 1886

The Catholic Young Men's Society

The society came into existence in Coventry on 28th February 1858.[169] Apart from offering lay support to the clergy, the role of the society was to create fellowship among it members, and through its activities form a wider bond and shared experience among Catholics. While it fulfilled the latter, those Irish with social responsibility who had the potential to provide ethnic leadership were absorbed into a society driven by Catholic social objectives.[170] Minutes of the first two years of the society fortunately survive and are outlined in Appendix 6.

With the exception of their entertainments in St. Mary's Hall, where there may possibly have existed some catering for the preference of those of Irish background, in these years their picnics and schoolroom based activities had a British resonance. The involvement of land owning Catholics in the parish, the efforts and geniality of Fr Pratt, his pervasive presence or that of his assistant Fr Moore, and the existence of the St. Vincent Society all tell of an inclusive and active parish but no sense of any Irish cultural direction on proceedings.

Reports of CYMS activities published in the press contained signals of loyalty and openess as in 1863 when at the end of their penny reading evening God Save the Queen was rendered.[171] Again in the same year a letter to the *Herald* telling of the success of an evening of readings it had organised, stated: 'many of our Protestant and Dissenting friends favoured us by attending, and we hope they will continue to give us their support, as we do not intend making the movement sectarian'.[172]

Much of the social activity occurred in St. Osburg's Schools. From the 1880s some of this around St. Patrick's Day had an Irish flavour (Appendix 6). In the final decade, St. Patrick's Day celebratory venues moved to locations in the city centre, perhaps due to larger numbers, or the absence of alcohol in the school, or because celebrations had become jamborees attended by 'new' Irish of the cycle trade. The St. Patrick's Day demonstrations of Irish self-pride jar with the integrative trend suggested as occurring with the post-Famine arrivals. Cronin and Adair saw two forms to the celebration: self indulgent enjoyment or a promotion of Irish nationalism. It would appear that the former was the main motivating force; while the day was a marker of

[169] First branch of the Catholic Young Men's Society opened in Sheffield in 1854
[170] It did create or maintain fellowship. For example executors of the will of John Rogers an original founding member who died in 1890 were Martin Tew, son of George Tew, and William McGowran - the latter two were early members in 1858-59. (England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1890 - 30th September).
[171] *Coventry Times* 2nd December 1863
[172] *Coventry Herald* 18th December 1863

Irish presence and provided a sense of group identity, the annual, transitory nature of the festival did not induce lasting community cohesion.[173]

Irish Social and Literary Society

The Gaelic revival touched Coventry at the beginning of the twentieth century and appeared anchored to Catholic surroundings. The Irish Social and Literary Society, held its first meeting of 25th January 1901 in St. Osburg's school (Appendix 9). This and the meetings that followed seemed enthusiastic and cheerful gatherings where songs and recitations filled the school hall that was decorated with Irish motifs. The situation did not appear all that removed from the pleasant concerts held in the school under the auspices of the CYMS. The attendance of the McGowrans and Fr Campbell in St. Osburg's hall suggested a comfortable accommodation of priests and active, favoured laity with those consciously seeking Irish cultural development. The relaxed approval of the Society may have lessened over time, as the assumed bond between the Catholic Church through the St. Osburg's location and Irish with cultural renewal in mind, lessened when the Society changed locations for St. Patrick's Day celebrations, to the Baths Assembly Hall where larger numbers could be accommodated. Appendix 9 outlines the Gaelic League's articulation until March 1903.

Easterly augmentation and later century Catholic advancment in Coventry

Development especially after mid-century showed the importance which the Church attached to locally answering expanding religious demand, to offering education and controlling its provision. With St. Osburg's sited west of the town centre, the opening in Raglan Street of a school, within which a classroom would be used for celebrating public Mass by 1863, was a planned initial response to the needs of Catholics east of the town centre.

Building commenced on a second boys' school and a combined girls' and infants' school on land adjoining St. Osburg's in 1875. The *Herald* 9th April 1875 recorded the ceremonial laying of the foundation stone for the new school for girls and infants, followed then by the stone for the new school for boys, beside St. Osburg's. An address was given by Bishop Collier who had spent many years in Mauritius but had to return to Britain due to failing health where from 1872 he settled into a quiet routine at Hill Street Priory.[174] He initially spoke about the importance of education and how popular education should comprise more than reading, writing and arithmetic. He skilfully developed this ideal into an exposition on loyalty as this report shows:

---

[173] Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair, *The Wearing of the Green*, (London 2002) p. 32

[174] The *Tablet* 29th November 1890 p. 25. He resided in St. Osburg's priory until 1890.

> 'In these schools the children would be taught to do good to their neighbour, and besides this fundamental maxim they would be taught their duty to their Sovereign, to "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God." An unworthy attempt had been made, he said to designate the Catholics of this country as wanting in loyalty. This he declared was an unworthy slander. There was no class of Englishman that surpassed Roman Catholics in loyalty to their Sovereign; and, he asked, did not the Roman Catholics pay taxes as cheerfully as anyone else? Did not Roman Catholics soldiers fight the Queen's battles as valiantly as any other soldiers; or did they know Roman Catholic soldiers to run away from the field of battle? Never; and he said that to stigmatise the Catholics of this country as an unloyal class was one of the foulest calumnies that was ever suggested to a vindictive mind, and he hoped and believed that the author of that calumny would regret it. But the attempt had failed, and it was now admitted that Catholics were as loyal as any other subjects of the realm, and they said 'Long life to our gracious Queen; may happiness and prosperity attend her as long as we have the happiness of being under her benignant and just reign."[175]

At the inauguration of the schools in October 1875 Irish-born Canon Michael O'Sullivan, Vicar General of Birmingham delivered an address.[176] His attitude, which must be presumed to resonate with Coventry clerics, was according to Herson, in referring to him in relation to Stafford, 'one of furthering the interests of the English Church and the Irish had to fit in as best they could'.[177] O'Sullivan exulted in the accomplishment of Catholics throughout England in building so many of their own schools through sacrifice, as exampled in Coventry. He observed that there were few Catholics in the upper and middle classes, most were poor 'hewers of wood and drawers of water'; they were not only poor they were unpopular also and had to contend with prejudice. His promotion of the 'poor and unpopular' line would have found an affinity with the Irish, but there was no acknowledgement of the Irish or their particular experience of poverty or prejudice. Neither were the children of the Irish who must have substantially contributed to enrolment figures given specific credit. While his words indicate that Catholics felt they received unfair treatment, the irony of his justification in the address for the separate education system that he was inaugurating, which would distance Catholics from the rest of the population, seemed lost to him.[178] By 1877 the

---

[175] *Coventry Herald* 9th April 1875
[176] *Coventry Standard* 8th October 1875
[177] Herson, *Divergent paths*, p. 287
[178] O'Sullivan opened his address with an echo of Ullathorne's observation in 1865 that 'the greatest union existed between the pastors of the parish and their flock'. Though these may have been simply choice words suited to the occasion, they reveal that there was consciousness of the close relationship between the clergy and parishioners in the city. His empathetic promotion of the 'poor and unpopular' characterisation and of the merit of achievement made through sacrifice would have found a hearing in many Irish ears. However as Herson reveals Sullivan himself led a well-off life, and was capable of hobnobbing with the elite of Stafford. At the opening of the new Stafford church in 1862 where Herson says the poor Irish were not welcome Sullivan stated that 'the real Catholic was not only a sincere friend to his faith but the sincerely loyal subject to his sovereign. Their motto was, first 'to fear God' and next 'to honour the King'. Sullivan in his address gave as an example of prejudice the case of a young man

school had the capacity to educate 340 children. Within it the future cultural and faith outlook of local children of Irish background was given what was considered appropriate formation; they were inducted into British values while receiving an education shaped by Catholic principles.[179] The educational standing of these Catholic schools in public opinion was, as noted in Appendix 6, important to the clergy.

Before 1863 St. Osburg's was only venue for Catholic community worship in the city which meant that all Catholics, both Anglo and Irish gathered together and would have heard Mass simultaneously. They did not have, as in Birmingham, two Catholic churches, which allowed to the Irish, the option of selecting one where they were more comfortable gathering together as Irish (but with the attendant negative effect of socially isolating them from English Catholics). In that large city English Catholics favoured the new St. Chad's cathedral while the Irish preferred St. Peters church.[180] In Coventry St. Osburg's was a smaller and more intimate edifice than a cathedral, so some mixing of congregation within it was inevitable, but there may have been subtle bias. The English born Benedictine priests trained as part of an 'English' mission may have pitched their devotions and sermons towards the tastes of the Non-Irish element of the congregation.[181] Class and nationality may have influenced attendance at particular times for worship, or between those occupying free pews (sitting 600) other pews (sitting 200) and those who stood (1,000). An 'English' or 'Irish' venue of preference may have arisen from the early 1860s as there were two centres where Mass was celebrated in Coventry: St. Osburg's, Hill Street and St. Mary's Convent schoolroom, Raglan Street.

This westerly and easterly apportionment of the city for Masses, and the taking of numerical pressure off St. Osburg's, was more physically formalised in 1893 when on 9th February, on land adjoining Raglan Street school, building of the church of St. Mary and St. Benedict commenced which would then serve, under the direction of a resident Benedictine Placid Rea, the new parish of St. Mary created four years earlier (See Appendix 11; Figures 4.7 & 4.14). Cardinal Vaughan and many Benedictine clerics were in attendance at the august ceremonial opening on 21st November 1893 for what

---

who was refused an apprenticeship in a drapery in Birmingham simply because he was a Catholic. For further information and scholarly insight on Canon O'Sullivan, see: Herson, *Divergent paths*, pp. 283-287

[179] The *Coventry Standard* 16th April 1877 reported Richard Gallogen, Palmer Lane was subject to a School Board prosecution for not sending his 10 year old child Ellen to school in October 1875 while a month later Austin Ryan from the same lane was fined 5s for not sending his child to school. *Coventry Standard* 15th October and 19th November 1875.

[180] MacRaild, *Irish Migrants 1750-1922*, p. 84

[181] Florid Romanism e.g. of processions in honour of Virgin Mary held when Ullathorne's was incumbent, may have been regarded as distasteful by those of an English tradition who preferred quiet ceremony with less theatrical display.

was a relatively modest sized church. See (Appendix 11).[182] Nevertheless, although small, it marked permanence and growth; Vaughan took the opportunity to directly outline his views on religious education. It gave an insight into what troubled the Church and what would inform Fr Norbert Birt's (Assistant 1892-1895) educational philosophy and his view of the appropriate Coventry arrangements for educating Catholics, towards the close of the century (Appendix 11; Figure 4.15). Catholic growth and permanence in this Protestant and Dissenting city was revealed by a serious census of worshippers on Sunday 4th December 1881 conducted by the *Herald*. It found that 503 attended one morning Mass, 258 another, with 464 attending evening worship in St. Osburg's. Adding to these congregations was an attendance of 216 who attended morning Mass in St. Mary's Convent making a total of 1,441.[183] Kiernan stated that in 1884 Coventry had 2,600 Catholics.[184]

Later in the century the old order was changing: Gordon died in 1880, Delf in 1882, while Sibree passed away in 1887.[185] The priests were seen as interested partners in social care during that decade. Fr Moore was listed among notables that included Sir H.M. Jackson MP and Mayor Alderman Banks that attended the annual meeting of the Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital.[186] In 1886 E. Adkins, Chairman of the Coventry Board of Guardians, provided entertainment in the Workhouse. Invited guests included the Mayor, five city councillors, Fr Pereira and the Protestant chaplain Rev C. Patterson. As part of an enjoyable programme Mr Horatio Lane showed on screen a series of views of Irish scenery while later T.P. Carney gave Irish impersonations.[187] Catholic support was countenanced in the arts. The *Herald* 7th October 1887 noted the Coventry Musical Society was under 'the patronage of W. Ballantine, M.P., the Mayor [Alderman Tomson], E. Petre and Lady Gwendeline Petre, the Right Rev. Fr Moore, the Revds. J. Butter and G. Cuffe, and many of the leading inhabitants of the city and neighbourhood'. However, Norman's words prompt caution in making an assessment that is too conclusive about the prevalence of an all round tolerance, in his saying that while educated opinion was increasingly tolerant, among working-men 'no comparable

[182] *Coventry Herald* 24th November 1893; Simpson, Centenary Memorial of St. Osburg's, p. 38
[183] *Coventry Herald* 4th December1881. The Church of England total was 9,916.
[184] Kiernan, Story of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, p. 42
[185] Gordon lived in retirement in Kenilworth and was buried in Coventry. There seems to have been little interest by 1880 in the subject matter of his expoundings in the early 1840s. Following his death the most substantial account of his life was written in the *Coventry Herald* 30th April 1880. The only allusion it contained to his lectures on Protestantism, that included criticism of the Catholic Church almost four decades earlier, was the following sentence: Mr. Gordon published several volumes of discourses and lectures, besides pamphlets and contributions to periodical literature.
[186] *Coventry Times* 28th November 1877. After recording the initials of first names and then surnames of all prominent men at the meeting the list concluded 'and a number of ladies'.
[187] The *Tablet* 16th January 1886

change seemed apparent'.[188] On 9th May 1885 the 'Escaped Nun' Edith O'Gorman spoke in the Corn Exchange about her experiences as a nun in New Jersey. It was reported:

> 'There was a numerous assembly, largely composed of Roman Catholics, who groaned, hissed, and whistled when the lecturer made her appearance…These were received with counter cheers by the Protestant section.'

The disruption continued and the meeting had to be abandoned.[189] There was earlier mention of William McGowran who was a licensed victualler and who represented Bishop Street on the City Council. Another licensed victualler also elected to the Town Council, for Gosford Street Ward in 1875 was independent John Kelly.[190] Like McGowran this achievement is noteworthy in terms of adjustment and acceptance by the broad community. The *Standard* stated that Kelly had been objected to because he was a Catholic which it described as 'a despicable piece of intolerance'.[191] The *Herald* saw the affair as a Conservative conspiracy:

> '[The] most unscrupulous misrepresentations were made by the Conservatives with the view of damaging the Liberal candidates, and particularly Mr Edwards [Liberal]. It was falsely said that he had refused to stand with Mr. Kelly because he was a Roman Catholic. Messrs Philips [Conservative] and Kelly were therefore elected. It may be observed that Mr Kelly although hitherto known as a Liberal, must now be described as a Conservative. The events of the past week or two have disgusted Mr Kelly with the Liberal party, to which he therefore ceased to belong.'[192]

Such mischief making in order to embarrass a candidate was common during elections. In 1887 it was still thrown at Ballantine that many would not vote for him because of the Liberal government's Cobden Treaty in 1860 that devastated the Coventry silk industry over a quarter of a century earlier.[193]

---

[188] Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England*, p. 20

[189] *Leamington Spa Courier* 9th May 1885; Augustine J. Curley, The Identity of Edith O'Gorman, the 'Escaped Nun' http://www.academia.edu/1507333/The_Identity_of_Edith_O_Gorman_the_Escaped_Nun_ Accessed 12th October 2018

[190] See Chapter 4 Tables and Appendix 6 (2). John's father was called Patrick. There were two men called Patrick Kelly in 1851. John's father was the Patrick married to Ann, however the following, may or not apply, to John's father: A Patrick Kelly was Vice-President of the CYMS on its founding in 1858. He would have known William McGowran who was on the founding committee from then. A Patrick Kelly was landlord of the Beehive public house in Tower Street from 1861-1865 and a Patrick Kelly died in January 1868.
John Kelly was first elected in 1872. In 1875 votes cast in the Gosford Street Ward were: Philips 722; Kelly 713; Edwards 692; Wilks 655. According to the newspaper there was more than the usual amount of excitement and drunkenness. (*Birmingham Daily Post* 2nd November 1875). Interestingly, while the *Banbury Guardian* 4th November 1875 gave a similar report, the words 'and drunkenness' were omitted. Walters, *Story of Coventry*, p. 200 said the council was dominated by 'the publicans, butchers, shopkeepers and professional men who had controlled civic life since municipal reform in the 1830s.'

[191] *Coventry Standard* 29th October 1875

[192] *Coventry Herald* 5th November 1875

[193] *Birmingham Daily Post* 4th July 1887

There was no allusion to Kelly's Irish heritage; there was probably little need to, given the knowledge that he was a Roman Catholic and also answered to a popular Irish surname, so what weight it silently had in influencing the voters is unclear. It would appear that in mischief making calling someone a Roman Catholic was more damaging than referring to an Irish background. Kelly was said to possess a sturdy independence which was not to the taste of Liberals.[194] Also it is suggested Kelly, who was a licensed victualler, might have aligned with the Conservatives because the strong Licensed Victuallers' lobby in Coventry favoured the Conservatives, having not forgiven Gladstone and Bruce for the Licensing Act of 1872.[195]

To conclude this section on Catholicism, Table 4.6 is placed for perusal, which shows in the case of the Kelly family opportunity was available and socio-economic progress attainable to the families of first wave migrants. The Patrick Kelly family had arrived 'early' - by 1831 - in Coventry, and perhaps if they entered the city twenty years later, the family trajectory would have been more prosaic. Their children were buffeted like all Coventrians by the changing economic fortunes of Coventry and their grandchildren by 1911 were aligned with the skills of other city workers. However the constancy of Catholic allegiance remains firm throughout the Table. Outwardly the only hint of Irish origination was by then the surname. The Table 4.6 displays some quintessential details of the migrant journey. John Kelly was born in Coventry in 1831 of parents who were Dublin-born weavers. He was a weaver himself but the collapse of 1861 was responsible for him becoming license holder of the Mechanics Arms between 1861 and 1869. By 1861 he was not visible to normal enumeration page workable search criteria that determine the 'Irish' as those born in Ireland or their co-resident children. He and his family are only detected in 1871 because his widowed mother had come to reside with him. He had enough experience and capital to take on the license of the more central Cross Keys in Earl Street. His Coventry birth facilitated his marriage to another Coventrian; He was a Conservative councillor and his daughter was a boarder in St. Joseph's whose practices were graphically recorded by Hannah Lynch (Appendix 11). One of his sons Walter was elected in 1925 Abbot President of the English Benedictine Congregation.

The *Leamington Spa Courier* 21st November 1913 recorded that Dr McVeagh died at 90 years, in Twyford Abbey near Willesden which was a nursing home run by the Alexian Brothers - and was buried in Kenilworth where he had resided after leaving

[194] *Coventry Standard* 5th November 1875
[195] Norman Lowe, *Modern British History*, (Basingstoke 2009) p. 226

Coventry some years earlier.[196] He was described as a Unionist and an ardent Roman Catholic. His longevity brought him into the twentieth century where his death symbolised the completion of what Denvir called the 'dying out' of the Irish-born.[197]

A contingent of Coventry notables and a large clerical presence were recorded at his funeral, among them was the Rev Walter Kelly from Douay, Woolhampton, whose Irish-born grandparents were, as just noted, weavers in Coventry. Like McVeagh, Kelly had moved beyond Coventry but his presence at the funeral, unwittingly marked the significance of McVeagh and Kelly in that spot, representing together two generations, where although the fulcrum of identity remained Catholic, the lever had swung from them being recognised as Irish to being considered as emanants of Coventry.

[196] He was still in Coventry in 1901 according to the census of that year, aged 73 and residing at 22 Queens Road RG13/2907.147.17 ED 17
[197] Denvir, *Irish in Britain*, p. 454

Chapter 5

Irish household structure, Irish community attributes and its spatial expression in years of heightened arrival 1841-1861

This chapter is framed around the years of heavy post-Famine ingress, when what Ó Tuathaigh described as 'culture distance' prevailed between the Irish and the host society.[1] According to Lowe, this period with its high Irish-born volumes was critical in the formation of the Irish as a community.[2] It was that part of the century when an Irish presence in Coventry was most discernible by volume, age-profile, behaviour, residential density and location. These middle decades also define a period when the Irish, in pronounced numbers, had to come to terms with a city whose housing and infrastructure was in its most unimproved state, and whose economic momentum was to falter because of unmodernised industrial production and continued industrial conflict. The chapter sets out to establish the demographic structure, occupational standing and spatial expression of the Irish 'community' for this period using the three census returns available between 1841 and 1861. In order to ascertain how these findings might relate to the wider setting, expansive household data on the indigenous Coventry population has also been extracted for one census, that of 1851. In some cases where the clearest comparison is sought with Irish data the term Host is applied to Coventry population figures which have been adjusted by deduction of Irish within.

The findings in this chapter for 1841-61 are best read in conjunction with those of Chapter 6 that expound on the years 1871-1901. This approach acknowledges what Swift refers to as the 'multigenerational phenomenon' that was migrant settlement.[3] By following such an approach, what is described in this chapter relating to the Irish demographic mid-century attributes, will be understood as the features of an abnormal, pressurised, period of the century when many migrants were unsettled and transient, but which did not represent its totality. The extent of Irish transience in Coventry at this time is evident from Table 5.2 which refers only to Irish-born males, since Irish-born women changed their name on marriage and thus lost their facility to be identified on an on-going basis. It illustrates that only 136 (30.8%) of the 441 noted in 1851 could be located in 1861, and that while 202 had entered during the same period there was a striking exit of 305 from Coventry making for a net loss of 23.6%. The following decade shows continued numerical deterioration of Irish-born, with a gain of 117 not compensating for an exodus of 229, resulting in a net loss of 33.1%.

---

[1] Ó'Tuathaigh, Irish in Britain: problems of integration, p. 23
[2] Lowe, *Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire*, p. 2
[3] Swift, Identifying the Irish in Victorian Britain, p. 7

It is arguable whether the census year of 1871, which features in the next chapter and which is the commencing year of Fitzpatrick's noted elucidation on the second-generation: '*A curious middle place'*, might more appropriately book-end the period of this chapter.[4] Irish anti-social behaviour of a type seen in the 1850s was also recorded in Coventry during the 1860s, and the inclusive effects of compulsory school attendance, albeit under Catholic patronage, commenced in 1870. However the year 1861 marked an abrupt change in the fortune of the city due to the catastrophic collapse of the silk industry that left Coventry for some years thereafter with an economy and a population in decline. The hurt economy and shaken social foundation caused many Irish labourers to leave. Those that remained had to find work and some turned to labouring work offered by concerns integral to the city, such as the Corporation or Gas Works which furthered their integration and commitment to the city.

Coventry abruptly fell into the type of town identified by Fitzpatrick that was no longer an attractive choice for young migrants because it offered lacklustre employment opportunity.[5] Thenceforth for two decades Coventry was in a diminished condition and that element of its Irish population, remaining after the exodus portrayed for Irish-born males in Table 5.2, would experience the fate stated by Fitzpatrick as likely to occur to populace of such stagnant towns, i.e. it would likely be older and settled. However any arranging of material into chapters covering periods of time, that causes a break in the narration of the migrant continuum of experience, whether in 1861 or 1871, is less than optimal. To assist in the formation of an overview, the layout of Tables where feasible, is presented in an 1841-1901 panorama.

Analytical framework

Components of these households

Information is encountered in enumeration pages in a household arrangement. Most of these households were sub-arranged under the prevailing social construct of a married couple (male as head) with their children. It is thus necessary to employ and use to best advantage this martial based layout as a format in establishing the dimensions of Irish in the city. Hibernicism was mainly conveyed to children in family settings. It is to be construed that the strongest presence of ethnic belonging may be visualised and transmitted where both parents were Irish-born, themselves of Irish-born parents. Conversely and much rarer, as in the case of Mayor John Gulson, where an Irish-born wife was of Anglo-Irish stock and was married to an English man rooted in the urbane

[4] Fitzpatrick, A curious middle place, pp. 11-59
[5] Ibid., p. 14

traditions of Britain, then what Herson described as 'Catholic Celtic' Irish sense of identity, must have been faint.[6] O'Day noted that ethnic loyalty had the potential to be eroded though intermarriage.[7] Consequently, where relevant Tables, are designed with a layout to allow assessment of the probability, given the patriarchal outlook of the century, that within the range of *Irish Households* there might be different levels of 'Irishness' according to birthplace, and its balance between the head and spouse. Further, a benefit of studying the Irish in family units is that a review of spousal pairings, and the changing balance over the years, between the extent of endogenous and exogenous marriage, should offer insight into the nature of movement of Irish into the broader community.

Families did not retain their completeness; the harsh living circumstances made fatal inroads early in life, so that on average for this period 19.4% of all *Irish Households* had solitary heads; half of whom were widows.[8] Fractured families might be anticipated to feature more prominently later in the century as the normal cycle of life took its toll, but they were also noticeably manifest in early post-Famine years.

It may be unwittingly assumed from the 'point in time' nature of the census that family size was fixed at census enumeration with a sense of migrant families in lock-step stages of family procreation. While there was a certain synchronicity noticeable in the post-Famine years of migrants in the same stages of raising their children, the period to 1901 was filled with a mix of families in various stages of reproductive commencement, continuance and completion.

After the main family was recorded on a census enumerator's page, if the household contained kin, lodgers, visitors or servants, then these were listed and could appear as separate types or in a variety of combinations. This was a time when the responsibility of a family to give shelter to kin, or the necessity to receive income from lodgers, meant as shown in Chapter 3 that households could swell in size, well beyond

---

[6] Herson, *Divergent paths*, p. 6. The Foster family mentioned in relation to Map 3.4A in Chapter 3 as residing in New Buildings provides another example where disposition to Irish culture may have been slight. In 1871 William H. Foster born in Warwick in 1828 appears in Leamington as a Militia Sergeant with his wife Susanna, born in Ireland in 1843, and a family that included 2 Irish-born sons, William and Robert. In 1881 he resided as an Instructor of Volunteers, with Susanna and his other Non-Irish-born children, in New Buildings, Coventry with William no longer present and Robert now described as born in Leamington. In 1891 William H. was listed as a Retired Soldier, and Susanna as born in Fermoy indicating that he had met her while stationed in its barracks. They were settled at 111 Vine Street, Coventry with 4 of his children. He died in 1895 and she in 1920. Details of his soldering credentials and countries where he served are recorded by Ian Woolley, *A Victorian Resting Place - Coventry's London Road Cemetery*, (Coventry 2015) p.51. RG10/3193.140.36 ED 6; RG11/3072.48.27 ED 10; RG12/2454.36.66 ED 12; England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1921 p. 286

[7] O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour, p. 29

[8] Reference to widows is for 1851 and 1861.

the capacity of what was in many cases cramped, dilapidated accommodation. Consideration will be given to the size of these households and the size of families therein over the period. After examining the traits of the household head including, social class as indicated by occupation, the focus will move outside a household setting to consider the age, birthplace and occupation of the Irish as individuals and will also express these characteristics in terms of the relationship between the Irish-born and Irishcom.

The type and number of households

In order to tease out the community mass into more instructional categories, in both chapters the Irish are arranged within a three-part delineation of: *Irish Households*, *English Households containing Irish*, and Institutions. The third category included, e.g. large hotels with numerous guests and servants, too unwieldy in numbers to process. All such institutional type social units are excluded from all household based calculation and exploration, but are listed and considered further in Appendix 7. *Irish Households* which are first to be scrutinized reached their zenith in 1861 when 319 such households were identified. An appreciable number of *English households containing Irish-born* was discovered; this household arrangement reached its maximum of 107 in 1851. With regard to these households, the character of their heads and the nature of their relationship to the Irish who lived under their headship households, are to be examined. They would have given cause for some Irish-born to show a diffuse pattern of residence. O'Day observed that the 'considerable Irish presence in middle class districts …can be accounted for by live-in domestics' but other Irish-born were marked in such districts because these households also contained Irish-born: children, lodgers, and kin.[9]

The total number of Irish and Irishcom in these households

Table 5.1 sets out the combined number of Irish-born in both types of households for this period. The number rose from a base of 434 in 1841 by a substantial 81.6 % over the decade to 1851 but then fell 10.0% by 1861. The Irishcom rose by 60.6 % to 1851 and continued to rise, if by a more modest 4.2% to 1861. However by 1861 the Irishcom figure remained ascendant more so by the greater contribution to it of local-born Irish rather than that of Irish-born. Only for 1851 and the consequence of a high number of inward Irish-born, with a ratio of 1:0.8, could the number of Irish-born outweigh local-born Irish.

[9] O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour, p. 29. In studies, e.g. of Lancashire towns by Lowe, that embody their 'community' by using only the members of selected Irish-born headed households, the import of Irish-born in English households can be overlooked. (Lowe, *Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire*, p. 48).

Irish Households

Table 5.3 provides the type and volume of *Irish Households,* the 'type' totals being individual to each census. This is so because when the death of a spouse occurs, the affected family that had featured until the demise in the married section of the Table may well continue to exist, but in the next census will feature under a solo-headed 'type' of display. The peak of household formation was reached in 1861 when 319 household heads were noted. Over three-quarters (77.7%) of these were partnered families. The corresponding partnered percentages for 1841 and 1851, at 85.1% and 81.0% respectively largely matched. The latter percentage compared favourably with Coventry households which stood at 74.7% in 1851.[10]

The most homogenous marriage arrangement i.e. of Irish-born to Irish-born accounted for a 40.3% of Irishcom pairing in 1841, 41.2% in 1851, with an uplift to 48.0% in 1861. This uplift was made possible, by the greater presence in the 1850s, following the post-Famine ingress of Irish-born young single migrants at a life-stage disposed to finding partners. This was at the expense of Irish-born male marriages to Non-Irish-born females (styled as Irishcom on marriage) which dipped to 29.0%, below the average for the three censuses of 31.6%. While this average was low, in some respects it was rather impressive as a mark of early integration since Irish-born men in these years were transient in disposition, may have been engaged in outdoor labour where opportunity to relate to Non-Irish-born women may have been limited, and where in this period the cultural divide was wide. Finally, on average over the three censuses a quarter (24.6%) of marriages of those in *Irish Households* was of Non-Irish-born men (styled as Irishcom on marriage) to Irish-born women. Taken together in 1851, the 72 occasions of Irish-born males in marriage to Non-Irish-born females and the 56 occasions of Non-Irish-born men in marriage to Irish-born women represented 51.8% of unions in *Irish Households*. That half of marriages were mixed and that a similar percentage for intermarriage prevailed before the Famine ingress, shows that in Coventry there was no historical unequivocal exclusiveness displayed by the converse communities towards each other. It is to be acknowledged that this conclusion rests on those who did marry. There may have been a swathe of the population suspicious and disliking of any involvement with Irish, and also although recorded as British-born in the census, some of those who did marry Irish may have been second generation Irish-born, which may have facilitated such unions.

[10] Coventry figures here include *English households that contained Irish*. The scale involved in comparison should be noted there being in 1851 in total 5,772 Coventry households and 220 *Irish households*.

Family sizes (where the size figure is the comprisal of parent(s) and their resident children) were small with the average size of these families in this period at 3.8 and not remarkably higher than the Coventry Host in 1851 with an average of 3.64 (Table 5.4). Family size 2 (at 22.3% in 1861), followed in the same year by size 3 at 21.3%, was the most common *Irish Household* family size. Across the three decades the percentage of family units at sizes 3 and 4 rose, with the latter in 1861 reaching 17.2%. If an Irish family with 7 members is taken as a large sized unit, there were of such: 13 (6.9%), 16 (5.9%) and 9 (2.8%) respectively over the three consecutive censuses. In percentage terms, the 5.9 for family size 7 almost matched in 1851 the Coventry Host figure of 5.3.

These results indicate little variation between pre- and post-Famine average size, but they may be affected by the fact that some post-Famine young Irish families may not have reached family completions in a way that those settled in 1841 might have, and that a capping mechanism operated whereby some children on reaching adulthood moved away from residing with parents. It emerges that while there were some large families, with some entertaining large households that drew attention to themselves, as was shown in Chapter 3, there was not in general, gross difference between the Irish and native results. However contemporaries may not have been convinced of this fact given the Irish had a stereotyped reputation for overcrowding. Average 'coupled-parent' family unit size over the three decades was 3.9. When birthplace combinations were examined the outcome for 1841 was: Irish-born/Irish-born pairings had the highest average size of 4.5, Irish-born/Irishcom pairings 4.4 while the Irishcom/Irish-born pairings were smallest with 3.6. The year 1851 saw the same type of pairing sizes, while the averages for 1861 were 4.3, 3.7 and 3.9 respectively.

When household size was ascertained, it showed an average size of 4.8 over the three censuses, although it reached upward to 5.0 in 1851. When pairings were addressed, across the censuses the Irish-born/Irish-born pairings averaged 5.6 with 1851 showing a post-Famine rise to 6.2 while Irishcom/Irish-born pairings retained the lowest average across the censuses, at 4.5. In matching the Coventry Household average of 4.5 shown in Table 5.5, these households where an Irish-born was wife to a Non-Irish-born were akin to city norms.

Referring to the relationship between the sizes of Irish families and size of Irish households, there was a remarkable consistency in the degree to which they matched the manner Coventry families equated with Coventry household sizes. With cognisance taken of the different scales involved e.g. 42 *Irish Households* and 1,193 Coventry

households at unit size 4, Table 5.6 illustrates in 1851 embodiment was at a rate above 50% rate for both Irish families and Coventry households. This percentage related to units of 2 and higher; at family size 3, 5, 7 and 8 there was slightly less Irish fulfilment compared to Coventry households.

If the second tier in each column of the cross-tabulation is inspected, i.e. where 1 extra person resided with the family, there is a slightly lower representation of Irish, due to less individual servants residing with them. However at tier 3, i.e. where two extra persons resided with the family, Irish families with a maximum of 3, 4, or 5 members had a higher percentage of family/household coincidence, which means Irish families were more likely than Coventry households to have a second extra person in residence.

The *Irish Household* families contained children, yet to marry, who at the most fundamental level gave volume to the community, prompted families to set down roots, but also on whose balance, between that of Irish-born or local-born (Irish associated children implied and going forward), may have influenced the perpetuation of a strong Irish identity.[11] Local-born children would have from birth experienced local cultural norms and the relatively more incorporating effect of familiarity with, and belonging in local surroundings. The peak number of 94 Irish-born children, as might be anticipated was recorded in 1851, a result of the ingress of recent years wherein some families had moved as a whole from Ireland (See Table 5.7). What is striking throughout the three censuses is the large number of local-born children, already existent in 1841, and the great disparity between that large number and the number of Irish-born children. The question as to how many and how long Irish-born headed *Irish Household* families were 'settled' in Coventry is given some answer if the age of their first Coventry-born child is assessed. In setting out the age of the eldest-Irish-born, Table 5.8 using the best mode of enquiry that provides for exactitude, focuses on Irish-born married heads, with their co-resident unmarried children.[12] It regards settlement of ten years as of long-term and highlights the range where a first Coventry birth occurred between 10 and 20 years earlier. Beyond that findings are problematic since grown children will likely have vacated the family home. It reveals that 43.6% of these households in 1841 had resided in the city between 10 and 20 years, 43.0% for 1851, and a lesser 25.4% for 1861. The record for 1841 discloses Irish settlement establishing in the city from the late 1820s.

---

[11] 'Child' refers to a son or daughter of any age. The classification divide at 18 may hide the fact that, as occurred in 1861, approx. 10.0% of these co-residing children were between 30 years and 45 years old (10 out of 105 'children').

[12] The Table relies on the birth of a child to derive a result, thus necessarily seeks information from those in a family setting. However those in such an arrangement would be more inclined to settle and findings may not have wider application to the unmarried Irish-born who may have had a transient disposition.

The significance of the amount of long-term settlement should be seen in the light of Herson's view that such term settlement offered stability to the community. However the Table also reveals that it was not an entirely long-rooted community either, in that many of the families under review, in 1861 notably 67.5%, had only arrived within the previous decade. The corresponding percentages of families who had been less that 10 years in the city in 1841 was 51.9% and in 1851 48.1%.[13]

In most cases married 'children' moved out of their parents dwelling. However there was a small number of occasions (4 in 1851; 13 in 1861) where mostly adult local-born-Irish 'children', who had formed relationships, lived as sub-families with parents. They lived as sons-in-law or daughters-in-law, perhaps supporting an elderly head, or requiring parental shelter; the latter were often females with offspring and apparently without a supportive partner.[14] The extent and nature of these arrangements is shown in Table 5.9.[15]

Lodgers and Kin

A large array of combinations of lodgers, kin, and to a much lesser extent servants and visitors combined with families to form households. Table 5.10 displays the arrangement in 1861. There was some selectivity by type; those with servants or visitors did not take kin or lodgers. While Irish lodgers and Non-Irish lodgers could be found residing together, except in situations where a large numbers of lodgers suggested a serious household head commitment to lodger taking, there may be perceived a tendency to take solely either Irish lodgers or Non-Irish lodgers. With kin, a division may be observed between the degree of acceptance of Irish kin and Non-Irish kin. This may not have been deliberate preferment for one kin background over the other, but rather kin presenting as a unit on a family's doorstep seeking shelter was more specifically Irish or specifically Non-Irish in composition.[16]

---

[13] The minimum length of stay which is regarded as the norm has been dictated by the ten year interval between census enumerations. Herson saw families in a state of 'long-term settlement' if an Irish-born member of a family could be located in two censuses, i.e. ten years. Evidence is not reliable beyond two decades as it is likely the majority of first–born local children will not be available to be counted as they will have vacated the residence of their parents. (Herson, Migration, 'community' or integretation? p. 160).

[14] This may also have been an arrangement to support a widowed parent or aged parents; one of each of these types was noted in 1861.

[15] For simplicity of display they were included as Irish kin in Table 5.10.

[16] The Tables distinguish between Kin and Irish kin and similarly for other kinds of extra residents. Those regarded as Kin, but not as Irish kin, were local-born and had too distant a relationship with the Irish-born person, on whom the family relied for casting as an Irish household, to be treated otherwise. Those referred to as Irish kin could include persons born locally if an Irish link was apparent, such as a young local-born grandchild living with an Irish-born grandparent. If those entered were listed as lodgers but had the same surname as the head they were listed as kin, which was essential in 1841 where relationship to head guidance was not available. The relationship between kin and lodging arrangement (as indeed between kin and visitor) could be unclear and what one household might write as kin might be written as

Irish lodgers and Non-Irish lodgers are amalgamated, and similarly for kin, and then presented separately in Table 5.11. The purpose of such amalgamation is that an awareness of the weight of total lodging presence is relevant since they served to increase the numbers resident in *Irish Households* and assist the contemporary perception of excessive numbers in Irish dwellings. Also Non-Irish affiliate in *Irish Households* must have assisted in reducing cultural division. These people were responsible for a significant numerical contribution to household figures. All extra residents contributed 16.8% of the total residents in *Irish Households* in 1841, 24.5% in 1851 and 20.5% in 1861. The Non-Irish (kin 22, lodgers 63) of 1851 and the Non-Irish (kin 19, lodgers 80) of 1861 accounted for 6.2% and 6.8% respectively of total residents.

An impression lingers from some notable cases outlined in Chapter 3 that many Irish families were conjoined by substantial numbers of kin. This is disproved by the reveal of Table 5.11 where 83.8% of *Irish Household*s in 1851 did not shelter any kin; a percentage that was remarkably consistent with that for Coventry Households. Likewise, for both, where 1 kin was accepted, a figure of 10.0% was shared. The average amount of kin, where kept, was 1.9 in 1851 and 1.7 in 1861; the former approaching the average available for 1851 of 1.6 for Coventry Households. Irish kin were mostly solo and are shown in Table 5.12.[17]

It might be surmised that lodger taking was a post-Famine issue, but boarding was a practice of the times. It occurred pre-Famine and likewise occurred in the host society. In 1841, 43 (24.8%) of *Irish Households* contained lodgers, with results for the two subsequent censuses at 61 (22.5%) and 55 (17.2%). In 1851, 14.1% of Coventry households accepted lodgers which shows, that at mid-century Irish lodger taking at 22.5% was higher than the city norm.

A revert to Table 5.5 shows that in 1851 lodging was more commonly observed in *Irish households* sizes 3 to 7 while Table 5.11 discloses it was most apparent as a practice where there were dual Irish-born partners. In the case of 91 such partnerships, 27 households took lodgers. By 1861 the same number of households took lodgers but this was from an increased household base of 119 households, and represented an

---

lodger by another. One can imagine an enumerator left with the task of describing the relationship of a large household of unhelpful residents resorting simply to describing most as lodgers.
For lodgers when there was an occurrence, which was not very common of e.g. an Irish-born parenting a local-born child, such a lodging child was placed with the parent in the Irish lodger (IL) column.

[17] Kin could include mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, grand-children and in-laws. Not shown was an Irish-born married female with her child noted in 1851, nor in 1861 among Irish kin a married couple and 6 non-nuclear families that included 3 widows each with a child. Figures in this sentence do not include co-resident ‘Grown children’ of the type described in Table 5.9.

acceptance rate down from 29.7% to 22.9% in a decade. Intermarried couples were fewer in number and were less likely to take-in more than 1 or 2 lodgers.

While families of sizes 5, 6 and 7 in 1851 could keep between 6 and 10 lodgers, in general lodgers were accepted by low sized families who felt most comfortable with one, two or three lodgers. In the case of 52 solo heads in 1851, as noted, 17 took lodgers, but only 13 of 71 solo heads did so a decade later (an acceptance rate down from 32.7% to 18.6%). Individual heads i.e. widows, or those with small sized families were better placed to entertain lodgers; a large sized nuclear family would curtail the number of extra persons kept, as the family itself would occupy all available space in what were confined houses. In 1861 there were only two situations where lodgers, and then in each with only an individual lodger, resided with a family of size 7 or above, but in any case few families of that size existed.

Lowe noted that few single persons formed their own households and were usually the persons who became lodgers. This was true for the Irish in Coventry in 1851 where Table 5.12 shows the dominant category was the Irish-born unmarried male, aged 18 or more.[18] It should be noticed that this peak year figure of 36 in 1851 was two and a half times the size of the corresponding female figure. Ten years later lodging pressure was dissipating and the number of Irish-born unmarried males had already halved to 18. There were also Irish nuclear lodging families: 11 were found in 1851 (3 of these were second lodging families in a household). Present too were Irish non-nuclear families: 10 were found (2 were second listed). The nuclear families were in the majority couples, while the non-nuclear families came in a vast range of permutations. There were e.g. widows with up to 3 children, females married without a husband present and up to six children, and widowers with up to two children. Only 3 nuclear lodging families were located in 1861 but the presence of 10 Irish non-nuclear lodging families in 1861 showed that for these fractured families lodging was a continuing and perhaps only means of finding shelter. Finally, what should not be overlooked is that Table 5.11 shows that lodging was not pervasive in *Irish households* as over three quarters did not engage in any form of lodger keeping.

English Households containing Irish

An appreciable number of Irish as Table 5.13 discloses did not reside in *Irish Households*. This was particularly noticeable in 1851, when 152 Irish-born did so reside and which equalled 23.8% of Irish-born residing in *Irish Households.* By 1861 the

[18] The figures in Table 5.12 refer to Irish lodgers; households could also contain lodgers as recorded in Table 5.11 that had no association with Ireland.

proportion not in *Irish Households* was more subdued at 13.8% (86). Perspective on these percentages can be gleaned from results for 1841 and 1901, years at either end of the investigation, when Irish-born living outside of *Irish households* had reached 37.8% and 44.1% respectively of Irish-born within.

It could be suggested that Irish residing in an *English Household containing Irish* and mixing with Non-Irish lodgers must have especially aided acceptance and acclimatisation. The nature of the relationship between the English household head and the resident Irish under his/her headship would be a determinant. To examine this, two illustrative Tables have been prepared. The first, Table 5.14 relates to 1861 and the second to 1881 which is considered in Chapter 6 as Table 6.5. In the former the emphasis is on the provision of detail and observations about the English head; in the latter the priority is to comment on the Irish in residence with these heads.[19] The most significant co-resident Irish groups in relation to the head in 1861, with numbers in brackets, were children (19), lodgers (41) and servants (18) and were largely exclusive to each other. Looking first at the parent-child relationship, in most studies, such children, who Herson refers to as 'accidentally Irish', have been unwittingly pitched with little ado into Irish-born totals.[20] Table 5.15 supplements Table 5.14 and elucidates on these Irish-born, who, with neither parent Irish-born, must have had few Irish cultural ties. They were most likely born to soldiers while on tour in Ireland, which was obvious in the case of the Chelsea pensioner in row 5. So too for the Collector of Inland Revenue whose wife and a son in row 10 were from Weedon Bec, which housed an army ordnance depot and barracks. The silk weaver in row 11 whose 4 year old daughter, Eliza Tatten was Irish-born, had a younger child born in the military town of Aldershot. The 1851 figure for such children at 10 was not as strong as the 19 of 1861 while the figure for 1841 again rested at 10.

English heads were also in relationships as employers with Irish-born servants. Only 2 *Irish Households* could keep a resident Irish-born servant in 1861 (although 22 other servants were kept), but 22 Irish-born could find places in English households headed by employers, manufacturers, victuallers, a proprietor of houses, a gentleman and an independent. Even though social distance remained, through such employment,

[19] It has been found possible for all the salient details regarding *English Households containing Irish* for 1861 and 1881 to be distilled into these Tables. The provision of such detail might appear insufficiently classified and dense at first view. In fact the rich texture compellingly and comprehensively informs on the individual interface between the English and Irish-born, who were their children, or lodgers or servants, for the whole city space. Such a package of information both defies and restrains Table abridgement.

[20] Herson, *Divergent paths*, p. 218

Irish servants became accustomed to English lifestyle and mores which assisted integration. There was a further relationship; that of landlord and lodger. Lodging with English households was a relatively strong feature in 1851. Table 5.12 told of 36 'classic' Irish-born single male lodgers of 18 years and over, who stayed in *Irish Households* in 1851, but that was exceeded at 41 by those who stayed in English households. Outside of stated lodging houses, or in families that operated lodging houses in all but name, where the number of Irish lodging might be expected to be raised, Irish were found in low numbers in households willing to take Irish lodgers.[21] Perusal of Table 5.14 acquaints that 41 Irish-born lodged with English heads in 1861; the occupation of the heads showed a cross-section of standing, they were not a sub-proletarian class who alone might be thought willing to engage with the Irish. Landlords did not appear averse to offering accommodation to Irish at the maximum size level of a couple with 2 children, or a single parent with a child. Table 5.14 reveals that kin and visitors numbers of Irish-born in English households were of little significance by 1861.

Birthplace

An adequate 36.3% and 43.8% of Irish-born in Coventry supplied their county of origin for the two censuses of concern in this chapter, as shown in Table 5.16.[22] With cognisance of the risk in drawing unequivocal conclusions without knowing the county origin of the remainder, the county of provenance yield from the censuses for Coventry may be addressed. Dublin for reasons outlined in Chapter 3 predominated with a 37.1% and 42.6% origination. Next in strength was Mayo which provided over a fifth of county respondents in 1851 and a lesser 13.6% in the following census. There were contributions from the western counties of Roscommon, Galway and Sligo, but that from the latter fell away in 1861. Beyond these and Cork, which had a noticeable showing of 8.8% in 1861, other counties were lightly represented, though in 1861

[21] It might also be the case that frequency and length of stay with English heads may have been different to that with Irish heads.

[22] The level at which county of birth was disclosed varied considerably between British cities and between censuses. In 1851 Finnegan noted 39.7% of the Irish-born in York recorded a county of birth, with 40.8% from Mayo, followed by Sligo 11.5%, Roscommon 9.1% and Dublin 7.7%. However in 1861 she stated only 12.0% provided a county of birth, of which Mayo at 32.2% was pre-eminent, but it was now followed by Dublin at 13.0%. (Finnegan, Irish in York, pp. 69, 94). Chinn noted 16.5% of Birmingham Irish-born provided a county and 50.0% of these came from Connacht. Roscommon donated 24.0% of the Birmingham total followed by Mayo with 13.5%. He also acknowledged that there was in the outer part of the city an established presence of persons born in Dublin and Cork (Chinn, 'Sturdy Catholic emigrants', pp. 63, 74). Herson stated that in relation to Stafford there were Irish county of origin census records for only 16.5% in 1851, and 17.5% in 1861, partly from which it could be adduced that 40.0% of the Stafford's Irish came from Galway, Roscommon or Mayo (Herson, A small-town perspective, pp. 89, 100).

Tipperary and Antrim showed distinct increases.[23] Within the slight scatter of remaining figures, it can be observed those counties in the north of Ireland: Derry, Donegal, Fermanagh, Monaghan and Tyrone, were little represented in Coventry.[24]

A 3:1 ratio is apparent for 1851, in favour of 'Irish' children born in Coventry compared to those children born in Ireland and now resident in Coventry. This gap widened to 4.7:1 in the ratio for 1861 (Table 5.17). This ratio in favour of local-born would distend further to 4.9 if those born in the 'Rest of Warwickshire' figures were added to those of Coventry. Table 5.17 lays out further information on those British counties where the Irish-born of Coventry may have previously resided. In 1851 the mention of Cheshire and Derbyshire, while a reflection of a general dissipation from the north-west, is also due to movement from the silk towns of Macclesfield, Congleton and Derby. If pressed to see a movement trend in the slight figures, with the notable exception of London, generally it was in a southerly direction towards Coventry. These birthplace figures are deficient as a true measure of the pattern of Irish movement since such births arose in nuclear family arrangements while the actual preponderance of movement may have been undertaken by single persons. According to the birthplace of children, movement from Birmingham was not as significant as its proximity to Coventry might suggest. An aggregate figure for Manchester, Liverpool and Rest of Lancashire, and the figures for London show they featured as previous residential locations. One or two families could account for the total of any county. The raised figure for 1851 in Northamptonshire arose from a Dublin-born weaver moving from Kettering with his family, and a Clonmel-born wife moving with her husband and family from Northants.

Pressing non-comprehensive county of birth figures against Coventry enumeration districts in 1851 to see if there was clustering on the basis of county requires caution.[25] However, presented to serve as an indication, they reveal that of the 214 (33.7%) in *Irish Households* who provided birthplace at county level, those from Mayo, Roscommon, Galway and Sligo may be noticed south of the east-west axis that covers

---

[23] The small figures for some counties may be so overshadowed, by the large contributions made by Dublin and Mayo, that they appear of little worth, but these small numbers had purpose in broadening the mix of Irish backgrounds and occupations. For example in 1851 the 12 from Cork included an Anglican curate, a clerk, a tailor, a watchfinisher, 2 in shoemaking and 3 in weaving related activity.

[24] These are volume percentages. For example the five recorded from Wicklow in 1851, comprised the family of coach painter Robert Ryan and wife, Rosina, and their same initialled children Richard, Rosina and Robert.

[25] In the sense that persons from some counties may be more reluctant than others to disclose information, including county background, and if they were concentrated in an enumeration area it may affect its birthplace total. Those under 15 years of age were not included in the calculation that follows, as it was considered they would follow their parents' decision in the matter of where to settle.

ground from Much Park Street to Warwick Lane. Mayo-born are noticeable in Leicester Street near the canal end of the town, but while Dublin-born are found right across the city noticeably in Upper Well Street and West Orchard they are barely represented in Leicester Street.

Irish-born in *English Households containing Irish* may have had cause to reside in an Enumeration Area for some distinctive reason that related to an English household, such as being employed as its servant, or most commonly because lodgings were on offer. Of these 152 Irish-born in 1851, 62 (40.7%) gave their birthplace at county level. Servants numbered 26, of whom 6 ventured their county: 5 Roscommon and 1 Dublin. Lodgers offering a county numbered 38, of whom 12 were Dubliners, 7 Mayo-born, and the remainder from a variety of counties. The mentioned Dubliners were very lightly scattered with no area emerging as especially preferred. Mayo-born lodgers are only found in Much Park Street and Warwick Lane; in the latter, two were lodging with a 38 year old hawker of hardware with a household of fourteen. A third was a 24 year old labourer who lodged with a 65 year old lodging house keeper with seven in the household.

Age and gender balance

The Coventry Host population in the three censuses presents a standard profile with the largest percentages in the young age cohorts and consistent reductions as age increased (See Table 5.18). Irish-born males did not follow the regular city trend for 1841. In that year their peak age grouping was 30-44 which reveals the in-movement of weavers to Coventry around 1830. Compared to the steadily reducing Coventry Host population age profile in 1851, the Irish-born presence was weak under 20 years but thereafter stronger till 55 years. This was largely due to post-Famine Irish-born, in their twenties and above, seeking work in the city; at 15.6%, the 20-24 age cohort constituted the largest percentage of all groupings. In 1861 the male peak grouping was from 30-44 but remained noticeably raised from age 50 years, showing the decennial advance into old age already of a section of the migrant body. Females followed the same trends but were slightly more prominent than males in the 20-29 age grouping in 1861, perhaps finding it easier to acquire employment and continue in Coventry than similar-aged males. Turning to Irishcom age profiles, these parallel, if less smoothly, those of the Coventry Host, over the three censuses and shows as a ‘community’, its age cohorts, in terms of stage of life outlook, were in the matching proportions to that of the larger population.

The age and sex structure Irish-born/Irishcom pyramid (Figure 5.1) vividly illustrates for 1841 the body of Irish-born were in the cohorts covering 20-44 years; those in these mid-cohorts, with males more prominent, were the weavers who had arrived in the period between 1825 and 1835. Since the majority of migrants were in their early twenties on arrival there were few Irish-born in the base cohorts; the Irish community found its broad base in local-born children of the Irish.

The constricted Irish-born base within the broad Irishcom bars is replicated in 1851 with the influx of young, 20-24 years old, Irish-born males apparent. The 1861 pyramid showed very few recently arrived young Irish-born, indeed there were no Irish-born boys under 5. The pyramids when taken together show the Irish-born were moving into older cohorts as the male 'shoulder' so prominent in 1841 at 44 years had made its way to 64 years by 1861.

The distribution by age of the Host population over the three decades was regular and it presents as the archetypal pyramid shape in Figure 5.2. Some elongation of bars in the vicinity of the 20-24 age cohort due to native inward migration of young work-seekers may be noticed. When the configuration for Irishcom is superimposed, for 1841, a variation by it from the Coventry norm is visible from the protrusion of bars beyond those of the Host population. This was a reflection of the 'Irish weavers' arrival' which comprised a large number of Irishcom children and those in the 30-44 age cohorts.[26] In 1851 there was a general matching of the two patterns, with the Irishcom that caused bars to protrude in 1841 still doing so, but now, to a lesser degree, and found in bars where they were ten years older. By 1861 compared to the Host profile, there were proportionally more of the Irishcom in the 40-64 cohorts and in the 0-9 cohorts.

There was gender imbalance among the Irish in these decades (Table 5.19). The Irish-born ratio was unbalanced in favour of males in 1841 and most particularly in 1851 (441 males/367 females), then there was a male slump in 1861 as shown in Table 5.19. However by 1861 the Irish-born ratio showed a correlation with Host population itself which favoured females over the decades.

The civil condition of the Irishcom according to age followed a predictable pattern as disclosed by Table 5.20. The age group with the largest percentage of unmarried for both genders was the 20-24 age grouping, followed by that of 25-34. In 1851, 65.5% of males 20 years and above were married with a percentage of 75.0% in 1861. For

[26] The patterns represent mutually exclusive quanta; also the pyramid bars emerged from the Y axis and were not stacked as in Figure 1. The disparate scales involved must be recognised where a male percentile point of Irishcom represents according to the decade selected, an appropriate figure on a range from 4 to 8 persons while for the host population it extends from 140 to 188 persons.

females the corresponding percentages were 72.0% and 66.2%. While the largest percentage of married men was in the 35-44 grouping the surrounding cohorts were well represented. The largest percentage of married females was in the younger 25-34 age grouping, though the 35-44 grouping did not lag far behind. Widowers as might be expected were prominent in the 55-64 age grouping and so too were widows, but the latter were also noticeably found in 1851 as young as 35 years. The harsh living conditions of the time made for 65 widows in 1861. The most comparable statistics between the Coventry Host and the Irishcom population are those for 1861 and overall these display but little disparity.

Moving along from these figures which represent the Irish *en masse,* to those dealing with *Irish Households* heads, it is to be seen from Table 5.21 that they were, with an average rate of 84.0% between 1841 and 1861 predominantly married. The age cohort in which the maximum percentage of male heads was found, at an average of 30.90% for the three censuses was 35-44, with average of 24.0% for 25-34 and 20.7% for 45-54.

In 1851 the percentage of all married *Irish Household* heads, at 84.6%, was higher than the 78.7% of married Coventry Host households. While male Coventry Host household married heads were slightly more prominent in the 25-34 age grouping than Irish heads both were similar in representation in the subsequent age ranges.

Occupation and social classification

Occupations were placed in five occupational groups and one residual group:

Class 1. Professional, etc. occupations

Class 2. Intermediate occupations

Class 3. Skilled occupations

Class 4. Partly skilled occupations

Class 5. Unskilled occupations

Class X. Residual: All young, scholars, unstated and indistinct entries.

The allocation of occupation to five class groups follows Armstrong's work and is based on the General Register Office social classification scheme with adjustments suggested by Armstrong.[27] He suggested Class X as a residual grouping for those stated: 'at home', 'wife', etc.[28]

---

[27] General Register Office, *Classification of Occupations, Census 1951*, (London 1956)
W.A. Armstrong, The use of information about occupation, in E.A. Wrigley (ed.), *Nineteenth-century Society, Essays in the use of quantitative methods for the study of social data*, (Cambridge 1972) pp. 202-223. The rationale behind using this scheme and the adjustments recommended are fully considered in his

Aspects of the application of this occupational categorization cause unease. The assignation to a particular class raised difficulty in some cases due to a lack of clarity in the description of occupation.[29] Concern arose over the appropriateness of the recommended class placing with the esteem of a locality for its staple occupations not receiving sufficient attenuation in a tiering of classes in a national register. Overall, a particular class allocation based on the occupation stated may not have creditably outweighed a more socially defining labelling based on background, education, or street location.[30] Such evaluation of status by local criteria existed in Coventry; according to Sheldon the fine gradations of the working-class social scale, in terms of poverty and respectability, were apparent to each neighbourhood's occupants, even though its occupational make-up might be diverse.[31] Using occupation as the sole index to attribute social class has limitations according to Armstrong, but perhaps more so in the case of the Irish, where their social ranking may have been contemporarily ascribed not merely on occupation but on less objective criteria.[32] Any approach undertaken to infer status on the Irish using this classification must be grounded by an appreciation of the graphic living conditions outlined in Chapter 3.

---

essay. To maintain comparability, the classification which Armstrong states is valid for the census of 1851 and subsequently, is also applied in this study to the census of 1841 but 'upgrading' is not possible.

[28] There were further detailed recommendations that in essence follow:

1. All employers to be placed in Class 1 if more than 25 persons were engaged.
2. All those initially placed in Class 3 or 4 who employed at least one person who was not a family member to be upgraded to Class 2. This would ensure that proprietors involved in dealing, retailing or manufacture would rise. Where innkeepers, lodging-house keepers, eating-house keepers and publicans employed at least one non-family member, their initial placing in Class 3 would upgrade to Class 2.
3. All retired persons should be classified according to their previous occupation with apprentices assigned to the class appropriate to the occupation to which they aspired.

[29] Before 1891 some occupation titles such as 'brickmaker' and 'boot manufacturer' did not disclose enough information to guide as to whether they described the status of an employer, or a senior, or a junior employee. Watchmaking was an occupational title that lacked the precision to confidently differentiate between an employer, a crafted worker and semi-skilled factory operative, and thus a correct class placement.

[30] The four Sisters of Mercy in Gosford Terrace, and in Raglan Street were assigned to Class 1 in 1881 but their poverty as nuns was at variance from other house proprietors and landowners to be found in Class 1. Occupations involving dealing e.g. in clothes were specified as Class 3 but as engaged in by the Irish may have been closer to hawking type activity which was nominated as Class 5. There was the risk of some people applying a grandiose title to their occupation as did Mary Ford, 24 years, in Caldicotts Yard, who styled herself in 1861 a silk manufacturer. In 1871 aged 36 she declared she was from Mayo and gave her occupation as silk picker. Apart from the possibility of overegged job descriptions, there must also have been occasions of modest titling. Arthur Ratcliff described himself simply as a brewer, yet had three servants. RG11/3071.96.26 ED 5

[31] Nicola Sheldon, Families in the firing line: prosecutions for truancy in Coventry, 1874-1899 *Local Population Studies*, No 83 (Autumn 2009) p. 27

[32] The suggestion that extra variables such as house sharing or location in a particular street might assist in capturing social class, falls when the irregular stock of housing in central Coventry, the difficulty of teasing out what degree of sharing the Irish engaged in due to ambiguity caused by the lack of consistency in how it was recorded and the complexity of areal social differentiation in the central Coventry.

Coventrians may not have enjoyed a standard of living extrapolated from the General Register office listing. The weaver Joseph Gutteridge wrote about the hardships he endured while Ullathorne's gave a sobering account of the poor circumstances in which many were entrapped.[33] In the main, city dwellers were not well-off and e.g. in relation to shoemakers, shoe binders, chimney sweeps, or dressmakers, who were assigned to Class 3; many were in modest circumstances.[34] Possessed of a skill, they were accommodated within Class 3 on a par or below that of watchmakers whose revered skills conferred on these artificers greater esteem in the city. Even these watchmaking skills could have been for some, ostensible skills, according to Sheldon, since the industry consisted of an elaborate assembly process based on outworking where an individual performed a single task. There was such sub-division later in the century that there was 'a lot of intra-occupational variations and insecure unemployment'.[35] Joining weaving as a Class 3 activity were warping, winding and filling. However in homes, warping and winding was undertaken by females in the role of assisting the weaver and was seen as lesser skilled activity than weaving. In factories too women undertook these roles, and from the young ages of some of those involved would appear less skilled than suggested. Thus Class 3 appears bloated and according to a general comment by Hoppen 'unhelpfully large'.[36] Gradations can be identified within those involved in the weaving industry, within the watch industry and between both. The gradations were not fixed and altered according to the changing fortunes of the silk and watch trades. Ribbon, watch and cycle manufacture all had heydays and nadirs and class apportioning on occupation may fail to capture the effect of those exigencies on status. There were shifts in fortune due to the strike and slump of 1860-61 when many weavers who were in comfortable circumstances found themselves in severe need and were forced to sell their possessions.[37] The changing nature of an occupation over a century may have affected its standing. It would appear that the occupations properly seen as skilled and synonymous with a particular class, and attained by an apprenticeship of seven years, could by later censuses, if not obsolete, through division

---

[33] Chancellor, *Master and Artisan*, pp. 119-123, 177-180; Ullathorne, *Notes on the Education Question*, See Appendix 6.

[34] Herson remarks that Staffordian shoemakers 'were often poor and of relatively low status, even though they were nominally skilled workers'. (Herson, A small-town perspective, p. 95).

[35] Sheldon, Families in the firing line, p. 29

[36] Karl Theodore Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation, 1846-1886*, (Oxford 1998) pp. 46, 49. Clerks were assigned to Class 3. His remark that white-collar workers *felt* themselves different from those who 'laboured with their hands' reminds when considering the wide content of Class 3 that it was not, in terms of social respectability, a monochrome category.

[37] Searby, Relief of the Poor, p. 356

of labour and mechanisation, have required less skill in their performance and were more appropriate to a lower class.[38]

In Irish studies, investigation into the nature of Class 1 and Class 2 groupings should be required as an enlightening counterbalance to the attention commanded by Irish volumes in other classes. Though acknowledged to exist, details on persons in these upmost categories, in other city studies of the Irish, have been lightly pursued, on the basis that they were difficult to distinguish from the host community, into which it was supposed they dissolved with little impediment. They also seemed to have been regarded as being too few in number to deserve specific attention when the circumstances of large volumes of Irish in unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled occupations commanded investigation. When categories of occupation are listed some occupations e.g. 'auctioneer', because of their scarcity risked being gathered under an uninformative catch all 'Other Occupations' heading. Thus brushed aside elsewhere by synoptic generalisation, as not quite part of the story, these occupations, should they here translate into higher social classes, are accorded greater acknowledgement and their circumstances amplified, to assess their contribution to the Irish in Coventry narrative.[39]

Due to the provincial nature of Coventry the extent and role of the Irish-born in superior social position may then have enjoyed proportionately more acknowledgment and appreciation than might have been the case in larger scale municipalities. Investigation of the content of Class 1 and 2 should reveal the occupations and professions of the Irish-born, with their mechanisms and motives that gave penetration into the echelons of the host society that were imbued with what Hoppen referred to as 'classic' Victorianism.[40] They may not in the process of establishing themselves 'in the just estimation of society' have acknowledged the significance of their Irish background

---

[38] Searby explained that in the silk industry of 1838: 'socially the first-hands shaded imperceptibly into the class of very small manufacturers; some 40 of the 70 masters, who kept in work fewer than l0 looms, each were first-hands who had decided to weave directly for the London wholesalers; these 40 owned only 121 looms between them. Men like these, moved back and forth between the positions of first-hand journeyman and independent manufacturer as the fortunes of the trade suggested, drawing upon small savings to buy silk'. (Searby, Weavers and freemen, pp. 196-197).

[39] It is a class grouping where the religious background i.e. Protestant adherence, is likely to be more detectable since they may have left at that class level a more noticeable trail in sources due to their professional achievements being recorded. This opportunity to gain insight into the type of religious belief held by individuals leading modest lives in other class groupings is less available.

[40] Hoppen, *Mid-Victorian Generation, 1846-1886* p. 46. He referred to 'classic' Victorianism as a belief in respectability, merit, competition, money, hierarchy, privacy and success; Andrew Miles, *Social Mobility in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century England*, (Houndmills, Basingstoke 1999) p. 138

but their achievements may nonetheless have signalled, if indirectly Irish attunement with respectability.[41]

General findings

The aggregation of all Irish-born and of all Irishcom by social class is supplied in Table 5.22. In order to focus on those actually occupied, once the residual Class X was established the relative proportions of the five active social classes was calculated. For Irish-born, Class 3 with 71.8 % is most prominent in 1841. The censuses of 1851 and 1861 shared a very similar profile with Class 3 dominant at an average for them of 47.3 %, and then followed by a strong average showing of 35.6% in Class 5. The influx of labourers following the 1841 census had doubled the Class 5 category by 1851.

Turning to the Irishcom their male percentage in Class X ranged from 31.6% to 41.3% reflecting the inclusion now of local-born children. The percentages in the five occupational classes when recalculated without Class X showed the same dominance of Classes 3 and 5 as was found for Irish-born. In 1841 Class 3 largely involving weaving commanded 72.3% of all occupied, while in 1851 and 1861 it commanded well over half. Representing labourers, hawkers, dealers in rags and errand boys, Class 5 was most obvious among the three censuses at 31.6% in 1851. Class 4 included agricultural labourers, gardeners, dyers' labourers and watch finishers, and appeared squeezed between enlarged Classes 3 and 5.

There was a much higher percentage of Irish-born females than males in Class X, reflecting the numbers of women who remained at home. For some men, as was the case with successful watchmakers, it was a mark of their status that their wives did not work; thus wives enjoying a Class 2 or 3 status may be lost in the anonymity of Class X. Irish-born Sara Mara Richardson did not have an occupation listed in 1851 and was assignable to Class X; yet she was wife of Liverpool-born John, an architect in Class 1 and also had a servant.[42] Unrecorded as well went the occupation of some at home who helped to wind for their weaving husbands. The recalculation in the Table around those active in various classes show the dominance of Class 3 particularly in 1841. Represented in this class were dressmakers, seamstresses and those with skill in the silk industry. Class 4 is also well represented in 1851 and 1861 by their average of 30.0% and included washerwomen, laundresses, and servants. Class 5 at 18.9% was more

---

[41] Andrew Miles, *Social Mobility in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century England*, (Houndmills, Basingstoke 1999) p. 138. Words quoted uttered by a John Brown who was keen to socially advance himself.

[42] The Richardsons could not be located after 1851.

prominent for women in 1861 than in previous decades and this class was comprised largely of hawkers, charwomen or silk picker-ups.

Turning to Irishcom women the pattern followed that for Irish-born. Class X contained 72.4% of all those enumerated in 1841 and over 50.0% in 1851 and 1861. When the percentages were recalculated based on the five active classes, the share-outs between the classes broadly retained the same proportions as for Irish-born. There was when compared, some lift in Class 3 and fall in Class 4 in the Irishcom percentages suggesting the local-born-Irish women included in Irishcom figures had a more skilled status.

Most Irish silk weavers were assigned to Class 3. To provide insight on the extent of Irish engagement in the ribbon industry, the focus of discovery is here placed on the core activity of weaving, even though the industry included a wider involvement of areas such as e.g. winding and warping. Weaving was a specific activity capable of measurement and best represented the intercensal employment standing of the silk trade; Table 5.23 represents the findings.[43] The full extent of the Irish in hand loom weaving cannot be ascertained since many census replies offered no further elucidation than ribbon weaver or silk weaver. It may be assumed that looms were all hand operated in 1841, an unknown mix of hand and engine powered were in use by 1851, though there was still handloom predominance, but by 1861 hand loom weaving was an almost obsolete description. Nor is there sufficient occupational title description to discover the degree of movement of Irish weavers into factory, or domestic but cooperative powered settings in the 1850s. The five members of one family of Thomas Doran in Bradford Street were alone in informatively stating they were 'ribbon weavers at home'. The declining number of weavers in the silk industry after the collapse of 1860-61 is apparent.

There were a noticeable 19 Irish-born persons assigned to Class 1 in 1851 but this was an aberration as there were 12 lodging or visiting surveyors who were most likely involved in the preparation of an elaborate Board of Health Map of Coventry published in 1851.[44]

---

[43] To be assigned to the Table 'weaver' must have been the pre-eminent word in the title, and not diminished by a multiple activity title such as weaver/warper or weaver/winder. Where 'weaver' was only mentioned it was assumed to be ribbon weaving, while coach lace weaving, plush weaving, cotton weaving, etc. were excluded.

[44] A September 2003 press release from Coventry City Council stated: 'Coventry Archives are delighted to extend an invitation to examine the beautifully illustrated '1851 Board of Health Map of Coventry' which will be displayed in its entirety for the very first time! This historical document is a work of art in its own right. It is so huge that it will take up the whole of St. Mary's Guildhall, is made-up of 26 individual, beautifully drawn and coloured maps. They show all aspects of Coventry in great detail, right

Irish-born heads of Irish Households

To marshal the data into a slimmer and thus more enlightening format and to exclude those, because of their local origin i.e. local-born men married to Irish-born wives, who possibly had an *in situ* advantage in establishing a social foothold, only the findings of those heads of *Irish households* who were born in Ireland have seen selected for onward analysis in this chapter.[45]

Irish-born heads of Irish Households: Classes 1 and 2

Hoppen also stated that when the five occupation class system is applied to English towns, Class 1 emerged as something very close to the 'exclusive' middle class, while Classes 1 and 2 taken together approximate roughly to the larger 'inclusive' middle class.[46] For 1851 as Table 5.24 discloses male heads of *Irish households* with 2.8% more than matched the Host Class 1 (1.9%) and with 8.4% matched in half Host Class 2 (17.8%). Irish deemed to belong to these classes are presented in Table 5.24 (continued through for later century decades in Table 6.12) with each person occupying an individual row of a Table across decadal columns.[47] Most, as clerics, doctors, or shopkeepers were in constant contact with the populace and were well known across the city. Neither insular nor anti-social, by acting as exemplary models in their social role, even if not actively setting out to, they would help to counteract negative images of the Irish. However an incident concerning John Brownrigge Collison during his vicarial service in St. Michael's showed this was not in all circumstances true and even a high status Established Church clergyman was not immune from being pejoratively reminded that his birthplace was in Ireland. (Appendix 2).

Dennis George Barnes (Appendix 2) was one of the few who made a consistent appearance across the early featured decades. Being a prominent auctioneer and furniture broker his locally focused business anchored him in the city and also made

---

down to individual trees! It will be presented for public viewing in St. Mary's Guildhall on 28 September 2003 between 11am - 3pm; entry to this event is free.' This map underlies the Figures shown in Chapter 3.

[45] Classification utilising headship may fail to relay the economic strength of the household as it does not take into account the possible contribution of a working wife, children, or incidental lodgers. However it is the most practical and suitable method to refine a large volume of data for further scrutiny.

[46] Hoppen, *Mid-Victorian Generation, 1846-1886*, pp. 37-49 'Exclusive'= merchants, industrialists, bankers, professionals, rentiers. For Hoppen 'Inclusive' covered a social area whose boundary was difficult to establish at the lower edge i.e. between it and that occupied by manual workers. Towards the lower edge of the middle class he placed clerks, schoolteachers, and small retail operators.

[47] The actual description of occupation given in each census may be a factor in accounting for variations in class placing. The Table includes those uplifted under Armstrong's recommendations.Where a person is located in a subsequent census and has not dropped out of the qualifying Class they are provided with a 'continuation' row colour of the census year in which they commenced to aid their recognition across the decades.

him well-known to it. However he was no ambassador for 'Irish' distinctiveness. He remarked in 1871 that he was:

> 'born in the army; of Irish extraction; religion a Protestant; in politics a Conservative of the Conservatives; born in 1803; a soldier when the Battle of Waterloo was fought; a member of their troop at the Crimea…'[48]

He examples in the extreme, the risk inherent in referencing Irish-born totals, of assuming that a person born in Ireland (and indeed his father was also born in Ireland) shared the dominant social culture of those emanating from the island. Next door to Barnes in Smithford Street was the Post Office where Timothy Peters Glennan was a clerk in 1841. From 1844 until his death in 1865 as Postmaster, with his Coventry-born wife as chief clerk, he would have been widely known. Since he was also a city councillor his recognition would have been even greater. In adjoining Fleet Street, Zephaniah Binley (Appendix 2) an Irish-born son of a soldier from Monks Kirby operated as a chemist and druggist. He took a prominent part in city affairs over a long life but did not express any sympathies toward matters Irish. Like Barnes although born in Ireland he was English in cultural outlook.

Also present across the decades, if not endeared to the populace, was James Hart (Figure 5.1), the harsh and hubristic influential ribbon manufacturer, of whose Irish birth the city widely knew.[49] Some names were of short stay and might appear in only one census. This was the fate of renowned Irish-born architect James Murray (Appendix 2) who died of tuberculosis in 1863 aged 32 years. Clerics such as John Collison who after some years appeared committed to the locality could leave abruptly. Others such as Thomas Breen from Roscrea, with his Bilton-born wife, licensee of the Queens Arms at 18 Burgess, noted in censuses between 1851 and 1871, might stay longer and appear settled but equally could move unexpectedly away from Coventry.[50] Robert DeLessert, a Dublin dentist (Appendix 2) arrived in Coventry in mid-1859 but his engagement with the city ended on his death in 1890 at 55 years.

Retailing was an activity that could aid upward social mobility. A few doors away from Breen in Cross Cheaping in 1851 resided linen draper Job Deacon from Newton Barry, Wexford, who previously appears to have been a draper's shop man in

---

[48] *Coventry Standard* 1st December 1871

[49] Hart's factory in West Orchard was known as 'Paddy's Folly'.

[50] Thomas was a described as servant in Smithford Street on his marriage on April 27th 1844 to widow Catherine Potts. They had left Coventry by 1881 in his case to manage the Punch Bowl in Stanwell, Middlesex. They appear childless which may have been a consideration in their decision to leave but there also appears to have been a high turnover of licence holders in many public houses in Coventry. RG11/1329.124.8 ED 14; Warwickshire, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1839-1849.

Manchester.[51] His central city presence must have lifted the view that the Irish engaged in selling were not all hawkers and marine store dealers. An even more remarkable advance that was achieved through dealing (and a strategic marriage) is seen in the progress of Ralph Smith, who was a 15 year apprentice painter to Irish-born James Connor in Coventry in 1841. When he died on 12 January 1883 at the age of 57, he was then described as having been a 'dealer in fine arts, carver and gilder and clothier'. His store was in a prominent location in the High Street (Appendix 2).

John McDermot from Callan, Co. Kilkenny, with a London-born wife, was identified as a policeman in Coventry in 1851 and had by 1881 become Superintendent Inspector of Police.[52] It must have been recognised from his example that an Irishman could competently hold a position of authority in the city as again was the case of Mark A Fenton, a most eminent Medical Officer of Health for the city in the 1880s (Appendix 2).

Each census revealed its own crop of Irish arrivals with that of 1861 being particularly memorable. It included Dubliner Denis McVeagh who in 1853 was appointed as a physician at the Provident Dispensary (Figure 4.9). Through his work there for over half a century, and through his sittings as Justice of the Peace for Coventry from 1882 he was widely known and was described by a contemporary as 'held in high esteem socially'.[53] He arrived in Coventry bringing with him high-class social status due to the standing of his profession, and well-connected mariage, but strengthened societal regard further, by long years of reputable service and by progressing to more elegant housing. His was a lifetime of conformity to local social norms, of endorsement of the Union and an espousal of the Coventry Catholic Church. He gestured to his Irish background later in the century by attending concerts of Irish parlour ballads in the Catholic schoolroom but it was only through this prism his sense of Irish identity was expressed; he was not an advocate or leader of the local Irish.

Those listed above could be said to have in part achieved success by modelling their behaviour around the enterprising or professional norms of the host society. Some appeared from evidence of birthplace of wife and family, and from residential and occupational details to be in almost every sense British. Ralph Smith seems to have adopted the social pretensions and affectations of English culture. He had become Ralph Smyth by 1871, and in that year his son was baptised in St. Michael's with the

---

[51] He was remarried by 1871 to Foleshill-born Harriet after his Irish-born wife Kate died. He was a widower again in 1891 before he died in 1892 aged 74.
[52] HO107/2067.606.15 ED 30; RG9/2204.23.21 ED 26; RG10/3175.21.8 ED 2; RG11/3069.25.7 ED 27.
[53] The *Tablet* 29th November 1913. He was the first Catholic magistrate appointed in Coventry since the Reformation. (*Coventry Herald* 21st November 1913).

grandiose name Walter Chidley Coote Smyth.[54] Robert De Lessert perhaps in order to signal his English cultural association commenced including a version of his birth name, the traditionally English 'Kellegrew' in his entry in a local trade directory.[55] In particular the latter two, but many found in this class did not have names that suggested an Irish origin. Also as a facilitator of social progress, or as a mark of it, all were married to English-born women, had 'street' addresses and could if required change to residential locations deemed appropriate to their standing. The dentist, doctors and clerics had portable skills which facilitated their entry to the city and elevation therein. So too might the presence of a possible mentor be advantageous, such as the dentist's uncle in Wolverhampton, or McVeagh's possible recommendation of Fenton as a suitable hospital surgeon.[56] This brief recount illustrates how diversified the experience of Irish-born might be in relation to Coventry. As emblems of Irish-born respectability members of this class may have exhibited to the local Irish the perception that success derived from involvement with and conformance to the native codes of behaviour.

This class contained influential commentators who reported about general concerns on poverty and health to particular fora; Binley to the Workhouse Board of Guardians, McVeagh to Provident Society meetings and Fenton to the City Council. Yet they did not perceive, or if so, openly identify any concerns about the living conditions of the Irish specifically, or of negativity towards, or exclusion of, the local-Irish because they were 'Irish'. Fenton was exceptionally placed to comment if he was disposed to do so. Perhaps by 1874 when he took up his position the Irish were no longer viewed locally as people with a distinctive living pattern that warranted comment. These notables did not foster Irish local community uniqueness, or cohesiveness. though in the case of McVeagh he participated within a Catholic setting in the celebration of a genteel Irish culture. With the exception of McVeagh, as Anglicans they may in fact have felt distant from the Irish Catholic majority, and not conscious of the pain of disapproval, given O'Day's view that in general anti-Irishness was directed only at Catholics.[57] As strivers they may have disdained those Irish on the lower rungs of society as feckless and disassociated themselves as far as possible from the risk of being included in

[54] Warwickshire, England, Church of England Baptisms, 1850-74. Chidley Coote did have an Irish connotation since it was that of the younger son (died 1668) of Sir Charles Coote, 1st Baronet of Castle Cuffe, Queens Co. where Ralph was born.
[55] Kelly's, *Directories of Warwickshire*, 1880 and 1884.
[56] Fenton may have had his own early repute, since in later years he became a respected Medical Officer for the city. He resigned from Coventry Hospital to join McVeagh as a surgeon at the Coventry Provident Society in 1872. His initial appointment had been in Worcester; McVeagh had links with Kidderminster in Worcestershire.
[57] O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour, p. 27

society's overarching disapproval of the Irish. The review relates here to the lifetime experience of the specified individuals in Table 5.24 Their British born children, especially females seemed to melt into the host society, as occurred to Robert De Lessert's 5 daughters.

Irish-born weavers such as John Lamb (1791-1863) who arrived between 1836 and 1848, Patrick Doran (1819-1877) who arrived close to 1840, and John Barry (1815-1890) who had arrived by 1841 might appear in Class 2 (Table 5.26) in 1851 if they employed an apprentice, but they did not feature in the longer term. The domestic production system was in decline with production concentrating in factories where it became more feminised. Lamb had passed away by 1863 but the travails of his three sons tell of the plight that unfolded for a second generation in Coventry (Appendix 2). Initially all weavers, Peter left for Birmingham in 1862, his departure probably caused by the silk industry collapse, and found work there as a porter and later a stable cleaner. The other two moved to Hillfields where powered domestic weaving endeavoured to continue. By 1881 James seemed an inconsequential widowed lodger with his daughter's family. His third son John, now referring to himself as a brewer, died relatively young at 56 in 1883. By then he was an isolated and tragic widower in Jordan Well, as his wife and his two children had already deceased him at young ages. This was the mundane denouement of John Lamb's 1851 seemingly comfortable weaving family that could employ an apprentice and a servant. Health issues, the process of ageing and change in the type and manner of city production took their toll on the following generation; these sons suggest that the second generation lived inauspicious lives. Interestingly, perhaps because they appear to have been Anglican, and engaged in a local weaving activity, these Irish-born sons found English wives without difficulty. Turning to Doran, his apprentice and servant had both disappeared by 1861 while his son William B. shunned weaving to take up watchmaking. John Barry had fallen in class status by 1871, when he was no longer even a working as a weaver, and had become a messenger in a factory.

Shoemaking was a popular occupation with the Irish (Table 5.26). As a result of the upgrade rule, some cordwainers could appear in Class 2, as shown in Table 5.24. In 1861 Thomas Hennessey (1839-1902) and Michael Hogen (1821-1887) (both in Appendix 2) so featured. The former from Queens Co appears in 1861 in Coventry without background, at 22 years of age, employing 7 men and 4 boys. This status as an employer and his later life profile as a publican, and 'Catholic of Coventry' may outweigh the fact he had threatened a rival shoemaker in earlier years, as noted for

January 1862 in Appendix 4. Shoemaking appears a somewhat menial occupation that could involve the practice of buying old shoes to repair and sell on. and it. Hogan (employing two men) was also a 'translator' of shoes and particularly unsophisticated. He had previously lived in Birmingham and with his wife Sarah was in court on a number of occasions e.g. for causing a violent disturbance in Well Street in 1849.[58] It was Sarah's antics that drew out the only nineteenth century available description of Irish settlement in part of Well Street or elsewhere in Coventry, couched in the notorious terms of the nefarious London Irish rookery. The *Standard* 18th May 1849 wrote: 'A number of Irish men and women, who are located in certain premises in Well Street, called the Coventry St. Giles, came to criminate each other for creating a breach of the peace last night; and Sarah, the wife of Michael Hogan…[was bound by the magistrates to keep the peace]'.

Irish-born heads of Irish Households: Class 3

Having looked at heads of *Irish households* who were born in Ireland and classified in Class 1 & 2, the circumstances of those found in Class 3 can now be examined. This was as revealed by Table 5.25 the numerically dominant Class. However the fundamental problem with this category is that it is too wide in its scope and should, if it were possible, have had finer distinction to characterise the large volume of people it contained who had skills but not necessarily ones held in equal regard. Table 5.25 reveals that Class 3 for both male heads of Coventry Host and Irish-born heads of *Irish households* showed a close similarity in degree of dominance. Irish-born female heads were too few to permit serious comparison with their Host equivalent. Like males they were noticeably dominant in Class 3 in 1841 where they would have assisted in the hand loom weaving activity of the household.

Table 5.26 is an exposition by occupation of all *Irish Household* heads found in Class 3 i.e. Irish-born and Non-Irish-born with delineation by marital status and gender.[59]

Irish-born heads in Class 3 did not fare as well as Non-Irish-born males (i.e. married to Irish women). Non-Irish-born males showed a more raised presence in Class 3 as a proportion of all Non-Irish headed *Irish households* (70.2% in 1861) than did Irish-born heads in Class 3 in relation to all Irish-born heads (44.5% in 1861). Results

[58] *Coventry Herald* 4th May 1849; 18th May 1849; 2nd January 1857; Hogan was fined for being drunk according to the *Coventry Standard* 7th May 1864; In 1865 Sarah was charged with receiving stolen property. (*Coventry Standard* 11th February 1865); Hogan was fatally injured when he fell down the stairs on 24th April 1887. (*Birmingham Daily Post* 26th April 1887).

[59] Not all Irish with Class 3 'type' activity are on display, since under Armstrong's recommendations, dealers, etc. initially placed in Class 3 were upgraded to Class 2 if they employed a person who was not a family member.

for Irish-born married heads in Class 3 ranged downwards from 78.4% in 1841 to 45.0% in 1861. These, together with results for solo-headed households, both male and female which averaged 55.8%, allow it to be concluded that *Irish Household* heads were well represented in Class 3 over the three decades, if more so in 1841 and 1851 than in 1861. The occupations that stand out in the Table were weaving, shoemaking and tailoring. Weaving (to include the first three rows of the Table), involved 64.5% of male household heads in Class 3 in 1841, 56.9% in 1851 and was reduced as a result of the collapsing trade to 45.9% by 1861. For *Irish Household* male heads these were substantial percentages and showed that for a goodly number of Irish there was an intimate involvement with the specialised local economy and reliance in common with others in the city on how the silk fortunes of the city fared. Watchmaking an esteemed skill locally, that merited a Class 3 placing, was not a prominent Irish activity, and when lightly followed in 1861, was engaged in by Non-Irish-born *Irish Household* heads. There was participation in a wide gamut of Class 3 activity that involved contact with locals which must have had an integrational effect.

Irish-born heads of Irish Households: Classes 4 and 5

Reflecting the yet unadjusted nature of the post-Famine ingress, Class 5 is raised for Irish-born male heads (and particularly so in 1861) while both Classes 2 and 4 are correspondingly lowered when compared to the profile of Host male heads. Similar to males in Class 5, females in the same class displayed an increased share of Irish-born across the decades.

Spatial Expresion 1841 and 1861

An Enumeration Area (EA) could cover a number of streets so each has been given a name that is, or derives from, a prominent street therein. To assist in pinpointing EAs on maps, they are also referred to by their Map Area number (M) found in Map 5.1 or Map 5.6 as appropriate. For 1841, Table 5.27 in conjunction with Maps 5.1 to 5.3 show the areal distribution for both Irish-born and Irishcom. Table 5.28 in conjunction with Maps 5.6 and 5.7 show the areal distribution of Irishcom for 1861. It is to be recognised that EA's might not be comparable in areal size, population total and density, social composition, or stage of residential development.[60] To provide some relativity, a location quotient, where 1.0 is the norm, shown in Map 5.4, and Map 5.8, for respective decades, has been provided to determine how residentially important each

[60] The population of the 65 Enumeration Areas ranged from 287 to 1,289 with an average of 692.

EA was to the Irish, in terms of the importance the city population as a whole attached to residing in it.

For 1841, the 'purest' manifestation of concentrations of Irish presence i.e. Irish-born, is shown in Map 5.2. Those EAs containing at least 20 Irish-born (3.5%) were as follows, M15:High St/Hertford St, M16:Greyfriars Lane, M18:South Fleet/Spon, M29:N Hill St, M39:West Orchard, M40:Well/Upper Well and M41:Upper Well/Well. Map5.3 shows these central EAs also contained the larger share of the Irishcom population, and in relation to location quotient, Map 5.4 shows Irishcom were over-represented in the same EAs. These neighbourhoods would swell with Irish over the following two decades, not simply because they had appeal to the migrants as areas where those of similar ethnic background dwelled but because being central areas they offered cheap accommodation in run down courts and lanes. Some EAs e.g. M43:New Buildings, or M10:MP St/St. Johns St that had a small numbers of Irish in 1841 covered streets that would have larger numbers in the future. Map 5.5 shows the relationship of the birthplace of Irish-born married heads of *Irish Households* to that of their spouse. No firm conclusions could be drawn because of the low numbers involved as to whether, expressed in binary terms, heads when Irish-born and married to Irish-born, showed different location preference to heads who were British-born but married to Irish women. If pressed, the 'inner' EAs e.g. M15, M16, M40 were likely to have more of the former while 'outer' EAs like M3, M4 and M21, more of the latter.

The degree of 'expansion' in EAs between Irish-born and Irishcom percentages as measured against total Irishcom in the city can be ascertained in Table 5.27. In 32 EAs it was < 1.0%, in 14 => 1.0%, and in 6 => 2.0% (M10, M12, M15, M18, M22, and M29).

In 1861 the Irish are most visible again in the areas where they were found in 1841. While the Irish are represented in almost all EAs in 1861 (where 1.0% represents 14.8 Irishcom and 2.0% represents 29.6 Irishcom), the EAs that encircled the Central Business District of M1:Broadgate/M39:Burges contained significant percentages of Irish. M40:West Orchard held 7.8% (116) of Irishcom in the city and was followed by M41:Well with 5.8% (86) Irishcom. Though adjacent they were distinct vicinities as they were separated by the Sherbourne River. M18:Warwick Lane held 4.9% (73) to complete the EAs with stand-out totals. The 3% to 4% tier with 46 to 55 Irishcom was represented by the very centred M51:New Buildings, followed by slightly less near to the core EAs, albeit still close in terms of a compact city. These were M42:Upper Well, M11:Much Park-26C, M47:Tower/Henry and M6:Gosford-92. Finally the 2% to 3%

tier (30-44 Irishcom) was comprised of M1:Broadgate, M17:Greyfriars Lane, M29:Fleet/West Orchard, M50:Palmer Lane, M12:St. Johns and M55:East. All but the latter 2 were integral to the heart of the city.

In relation to location quotient for 1861, Map 5.8 shows Irishcom were relatively under-represented in south-west, north-west (including Hillfields) and west EAs, M62:Lower Ford, and M53:Far Gosford EAs. They were relatively over-represented in the old inner core EAs, already remarked on, that circled M1:Broadgate/M:39Burgess. Those old core EAs featured prominently in the distribution of 125 Irishcom lodgers, with M40:West Orchard accepting the highest amount of 16, M17:Greyfriars Lane of 10, and M14:Earl of 9.

The degree of 'expansion' in different EAs between Irish-born and Irishcom percentages as measured against total Irishcom in the city can be ascertained in Table 5.28. In 41 EAs it was < 1.0%, in 17 => 1.0% and in 4 => 2.0% (M40:West Orchard 3.9%, M41:Well 2.9%, M18:Warwick Lane 2.7% and M42:Upper Well 2.0%).

Chapter 6

Irish household structure, Irish community attributes and its spatial expression in years of adjustment and settlement 1871-1901

This was a period where a section of the Irish community, sharply uplifted in size according to the 1851 and 1861 censuses, adjusted and committed to the city. The inaugural statistics for this period commencing in 1871 showed decisive change had occurred over the previous decade. Herson referred to an ageing Irish population in Stafford evidenced in 1871, where a third of his Irish were over 45 years of age. In Coventry there was an even greater share of the Irish-born in their mature years; 37.5% of the Irish-born were 45 years of age and over.[1] Further, in 1871 the Irish-born population had fallen by almost a third, from 724 to 480, during the previous decade. Death would increasingly thin the community of its Irish-born, and the measurable community detectable in the census through association with these Irish-born, would consequently also fall. However while the statistics record a decline, it is to be recalled that beyond this measurable community lay, mentioned earlier as recognised by Fitzpatrick, a more shadowy quantum of local-born Irish children who had grown up, and fanned out from the home in which they had been reared by an Irish-born parent.[2] Irish-born and detectable local-born-Irish numerically diminished until 1891, but thereafter was overlain by a fresh inward movement of Irish-born seeking out work in the cycle industry and in the growing tertiary sector of the municipality. The latter movement led to a gain of 92 Irish-born during the final decade. The Irish experienced life in this thirty year period of the city's history when its gloomy economic destiny reversed and its character matured.

This was a period in the fortunes of Coventry where its outset, as recorded in the census of 1871, was marked by a population figure of 40,113 which showed a decline through emigration of 1,536 since 1861.[3] In the same decade nearby Leicester had increased it population by 27,000 and Nottingham by 64,000. By the end of the period reviewed in this study, the cycle industry, though it had already passed its heyday, had re-animated the city and had drawn in immigrants that helped swell the population of 1871 by 75.2% to reach 70,296. Almost a third of that increase had occurred in the final decade of the century. In an expanding city, Irish numbers were diluted and did not

---

[1] John Herson, Irish migration and settlement in Victorian Britain: a small-town perspective, in Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939* (London 1989) p. 92 Herson, A small-town perspective, p. 92

[2] Fitzpatrick, A curious middle place, p. 13

[3] Coventry ED = 393

threaten; Irish-born in the final decade of the century represented 0.7% of the population, with measurable Irishcom in 1901 only 1.2% of same.

The city was becoming more urbane and informed as the century wore-on. There were mutual improvement societies, a medical provident society, a music society, a choral association and an opera house that opened in 1889. Voluntarism and philanthropy were exampled in the letters of appeal of Louisa Gulson, Irish-born wife of the mayor, in 1871 to a local newspaper for funds to fit out a second dedicated children's ward in the local hospital.[4] Mention of the construction of a tram network suffices to indicate municipal infrastructural betterment. Very telling of public opinion of the time was the re-establishment in July 1874 of a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals. This was prompted by a desire to end the practice in centre city Butchers Row of 'calf bleeding' where sheep and pigs were publicly slaughtered in the street.[5]

Conservative MP, H.W. Eaton in March 1880 stated of Coventry that there was still a vast amount of distress and suffering due to a from lack of work:

> 'We may, no doubt, be told of the other industries which have sprung up, and made a home in this city. Is that any satisfactory answer to the man who is suffering from the annihilation of his own trade, or is it any consolation to the watchmaker, to the weaver, or to the dyer to be told that other trades are springing up in this city and taking the place of those in which he has been brought up from his youth, or will that change in any way satisfy his children for the want of bread which his labour once earned for them.'[6]

The cycle industry did return confidence to the city; a view of Kelly's Directory in 1896 indicates that commercial activity was wide-ranging and that copious professional services were on offer as the century drew to a close.[7]

Relative to the middle decades, the Irish were now better placed. They were resident in a city which was sharing in the social and economic progress, and increasing tolerance that was part of the backdrop of the nineteenth century as it advanced towards closure. The 1850s Irish influx that found its abatement extending into the 1870s and 1880s was significantly comprised of agrarian people, taking initial opportunity for employment in familiar activity e.g. gardening, labouring, laundering and charring, which was unskilled work where ruggedness and strength counted. However from 1870

---

[4] Letter dated January 12th 1873 *to Coventry Herald*
[5] *Coventry Herald* 10th July 1874; 24th July 1874
[6] *Coventry Times* 17th March 1880; Gutteridge wrote about the stagnation of the ribbon trade that left many weavers 'silently but patiently starving' a decade later when trade fell off. He wrote about his lack of work in late 1890, early 1891 and 1892, and the odd jobs he was compelled to do to avoid starvation. (Chancellor, *Master and Artisan*, pp. 229, 231, 232)
[7] *Kelly's Directory of Warwickshire* (London 1896)

local-born children of the Irish benefitted from compulsorily elementary schooling. As a consequence of being literate they could apply for a wider range of jobs; ones that involved direct contact with the members of the host society through working beside them in factories and commercial businesses (Appendix 6). Many new Irish-born arrivals to the city towards the end of the century were attuned to an urban milieu having come from cosmopolitan Dublin, or through having already spent time in British surroundings, e.g. Kent (Chatham), London or Birmingham.

This was a time when the Irish enjoyed greater self esteem. They had, perhaps, while not truly appreciating it, benefited from the municipal improvement in sanitary standards and medical provision, and from regulation preventing overcrowding, that were features of the second half of the century. The availability of more regular employment in the cycle industry, within the constrictions of the insecure and seasonal 'boom and bust' environment noted by Sheldon, in the late decades of the century must have especially boosted their morale and commitment to the city.[8] There were other lifting inclusionary influences, as mentioned in Chapter 4, such as the developing respect for the standing of the Catholic Church and tolerance of its mode of educational provision. This was proudly provided in new schools opened in 1876, and helped in socialising the Irish through its promotion of a culture of loyalty, abidance with the law and of remaining inconspicuous.

There were celebrations of Irish heritage that made for a positive identity and the frequent reference in constitutional politics to the 'Ireland question' made place of origin relevant. While there were differences in approach to the future administration of Ireland, its articulation in Coventry was without rancor and contained within the arena of parliamentary engagement. The Liberal consciousness in the city (ordinarily balanced by Conservatism) was enough to give the Irish, a contented optimism for the time being, that the task of providing justice for Ireland was taken seriously by a section of the legislature. The problems in Ireland that created distaste for Irish-born now seemed to be considered to relate less to the misery, poverty and fecklessness of a priest-ridden people and more so to land ownership issues and methods to achieve self-determination. The *Coventry Times* in 1889 wrote:

> 'The truth about the Irish question is gradually finding its way into the heart and mind of the English people. It is no longer popularly believed in this country that the Irish nation is mainly composed of idle rascals and dissolute ruffians. Irish members of Parliament have been of late often found upon English platforms, and

[8] Sheldon, Families in the firing line, p. 30

their hearers have been surprised to discern that the persons addressing them were educated gentlemen.'[9]

As the century turned, a new Gaelic League nationalism created pride in, and the sharing of, an Irish identity that had been imbued by the League with a dignified cultural form. From 1871 in day-to-day Coventry the negativity of Fenian campaigns and the impact of the Famine numbers seemed to fade without mention or much remembrance, into yesteryear. This quietening also seemed to have largely occurred in Birmingham after 1867, the year of the Murphy Riots. Collective Irish public memory can be long and unforgiving but also short and forgetful. As the century aged fewer had direct memory of these happenings. There was less negative public representation of the Irish. A concert was held in 1880 in the Corn Exchange in aid of Irish distress to an audience gesturing goodwill towards the Irish.[10]

There was too the continued sprinkling of respectable Irish-born professionals, merchants and entrepreneurs fully acclimatised to the city. The smooth ability to integrate, self-assurance, and usually exemplary behaviour of these petite bourgeoisie showed in a positive manner to locals that being Irish-born did not automatically confer low-standing or deserve social disdain. Irish-born. It appeared to have been perfectly acceptable in Coventry, though her Protestant background no doubt facilitated this, for Irish-born Louisa Gulson, referred to above, to have been married to John Gulson who was a most prominent local citizen and benefactor. (Appendix 2).

The chapter sets out to establish the demographic structure, structural change and the spatial expression from 1871 onwards of this ageing and mutating Irish grouping that was enjoined by incoming Irish-born from the 1880s, that were first enumerated in 1891. The chapter will also seek data from the four relevant censuses to permit an assessment of the social standing and likely continuance of the Irish 'community'. In order to ascertain how Irish findings might relate to the wider setting covered by this chapter, expansive household data on the indigenous Coventry population has also been extracted for one census, that of 1881. The irony is that for this period, in census terms, the grown children of Irish-born not resident with parents, were mingled with the host figures. Given this reality, it is to be recognised particularly in this chapter, that each census portrayed stands alone to itself and when statistics are provided to illustrate the degree of relative decennial change of Irishcom these are necessarily indicative rather

[9] *Coventry Times* 20th February 1889

[10] Ibid. 24th March 1880. The crowded concert was under the patronage of the mayor, and was attended by the four candidates for the city, Dr McVeagh and 'other influential gentlemen'. The Irish organisers wrote in the *Dublin Weekly Nation* 1st May 1880 of 'the warm hand of friendship extended to them by their English brethern'.

than categorical in nature. The same analytical approach and framework employed in the previous chapter is followed in this chapter and in this commonality shares a number of its Tables.

Censual disclosure 1871-1901

The Irish-born in 1871, as above noted, had fallen in the previous decade by a third. A further decline of over a quarter (26.5%) occurred to 1881 with a final decline of 11.0% to 1891. Corresponding declines in Irishcom from 1861 were 23.2%, 26.7% and 19.3%.[11] During the last quarter of that century, as city population was increasing, the declining numbers reduced the proportion of Irish in the city to below 1.0%. The 1891 census represented the numerical nadir of the post-Famine Irish-born contingent and of measurable Irishcom in Coventry. From this census onwards industrial developments would again lift the number of Irish-born; from 672 in 1891 to 848 in 1901. Over this period, the Irish-born in *English Households containing Irish* rose from representing 10.6% of Irish-born in households in 1871 to 27.1% in 1891 and to a striking engagement of 30.4% in 1901. (Table 6.1). The Table shows that the 'community' i.e. Irishcom it was possible to identify in these later century censuses when expressed in terms of Irish-born was on average greater by a factor of 2.3.

Behind all these statistics were real people who were ageing, many with little financial independence, whose changing marital circumstances meant family relationship classification changed around them over this period. The position, briefly outlined, of Ann Thompson should suffice as an example of this transition (See Table 6.2). She and her husband Richard were recorded in 1861 as both Dublin-born coach lace weavers who had come to Coventry some years earlier from Manchester where their son Michael was born. In 1871 Ann was recorded as the married head of the household, there being no sign of Richard. In 1881 she was described as the widowed head of the household, but by 1891 now quite elderly she had been relegated to residing under the headship of her son.[12]

Table 5.3 sets out the continuing decline in the number of partnered *Irish household* families from 1861. What is noticeable is the relatively greater decline in partnerships where both were Irish-born after 1861, such that by 1891 they consisted of only 19.6% of *Irish household* marriages. The Table is clear that the greater percentage of *Irish household* marriages from 1871 included a Non-Irish partner conveying

[11] Barracks excluded from all calculations

[12] Her census presence with her adult son, Michael, fortunately allows for the circumstances of a second-generation to emerge. He is seen to have smoothly integrated as he had married an English wife and was a watchmaker – a skilled, local staple occupation.

engagement with the host community. If however attention is given to the number of marriages where the male was Irish-born, and in the patriarchal society of the time where his 'Irish' outlook was likely to hold sway then such 'Irish' in tone marriages were still more common (roughly by two thirds) than ones where an English man was married to an Irish woman.

These Irish-born male headed marriages would appear mostly to be long standing with 69.1% of the 133 heads in 1871 aged 40 or more. In 1881 it was rare to find Irish-born males under 40 years heading marriages (15 out of 82). Even in the 1901 upturn there were but 21 Irish-born/Irish-born marriages and only 5 where the male was under 40 years. In fact in that year there existed a strong proportion of marriages, 42.6% (29 out of 68), where Irish-born men (under 40 years) were married to Non-Irish-born women again reminding of the continued extent even of first-generation mixed marriage.

Solo headed households grew in volume over the decades as death took its toll and came to account for 34.9% of all households in 1891. The heads of these households consisted of the widowed, and women whose husbands were away most likely searching for work, but at an average rate of approx. 54.7% widows predominated over the four censuses.

From Table 5.4 it can be deduced that family size 2, followed by size 3, was the most common family size from 1871-1901 and that the average family size for the period remained at a low 3.7. which was not remarkably higher than the Coventry average of 3.8 in 1881. Family size in the census represents the number resident at the time of its taking and not necessarily the total number born to a family during child-bearing years.[13] Thus family size may be more clipped in presentation in this period relative to 1841-61, as a result of the children present in the 50s and 60s having grown and vacated their childhood environs. There was still a number of larger sized units. During analysis of the 1841-61 period an Irish family with 7 members was chosen as a large sized unit. A similar approach now reveals there was still, of such sized families, over the four consecutive censuses respectively: 9 (3.5%), 12 (6.7%), 2 (1.3%) and 10 (5.7%). The 6.7% for 1881 may again be viewed as not entirely distant from the Coventry Host percentage of 5.8% based on 561 units. For that year the profiles of the percentages of *Irish household* families in all of the different sizes were very similar when compared to the Coventry Host.

[13] It also refers to the family as a unit and not simply the number of children in the unit.

Looking within *Irish households,* the average coupled family unit size showed little variation over the four censuses, when the birthplace combinations were examined. The Irish-born/Irish-born pairings had a 4.0 average size, the Irish-born/Irishcom pairings 4.2 while the Irishcom/Irish-born pairings also returned 4.2. Solo headed family units were smaller; the average was 2.3.

There was a maximum of approx 10 persons in most households over these censuses, but very occasionally a household could contain significantly more. In 1881 the average size of a Coventry Household was 4.5 while that of an *Irish household* according to Table 5.5 was similar; a percentage which was consistent with the average of 4.6 across the four censuses.

When household size was ascertained for couples across the four censuses the Irish-born/Irish-born pairings averaged 5.2, Irish-born/Irishcom pairings 4.8, and Irishcom/Irish-born pairings 5.0. The greatest disparity was shown in 1901 with Irish-born/Irish-born pairings at 5.3 and Irishcom/Irish-born pairings at 4.2. Solo headed households were smaller; the average across the censuses was 3.5.

The extent to which *Irish household* families at various sizes matched i.e. totally embodied the household size, and the corresponding situation for the Coventry Host are explored for 1881 and results are shown in Table 6.3. When the family size was 2 this was also the household size 57.8% of the time for the Irish and nearly matched that of Coventry families at 59.3%. For family sizes in the range 3, 4, 5 and 6, Irish families still completed the household in the region of 60.0% but in that range on average 7.6% lower than for Coventry families. In the case of the *Irish household* with family size of 2, up to four extra could be complete the household, and with family size 3, 4, and 5, one or two extra persons could complete the household. In contrast, for Coventry Households with familes of various sizes, 1 extra person and to a lesser extent 2, usually helped to bring the household to completion. While there were exceptions, and there was a large disparity between the totals under contrast, as a general statement the relationship between family size and household size for the two groupings was similar in 1881.

Finally in relation to *Irish Household* families, the volume of their children yet to marry, set out in Table 5.7 indicates over this period, the dominance of local-born children of Irish parentage. A reboot of numbers is visible in 1901 but the fall away after 1861 in the number of Irish-born children is very marked and the 23 in 1871 represented merely 4.5% of all children. From relating the number of children who came as first to be born in Coventry rather than elsewhere, between 10 and 20 years ago

to their *Irish Household* heads, for 1871 set out in Table 5.8 it can be observed that 58.6% of 87 heads were resident in the city for that length of time and almost a further quarter were resident for less than ten years. The maturing of length of stay relative to 1861 is obvious when 67.5% of 114 families were less than 10 years in the city. A fresh cycle of settlement is visible for 1901 with 61.0% of 59 heads having evidence of arrival, through the birth of their first child to be born in Coventry rather than elsewhere, as occurring within the previous 10 years.

Lodgers and Kin

Lodger taking had eased off by 1881. Now, according to Table 5.5, 9.0% of *Irish Households* kept lodgers, with or without an Irish background, which was a reduction from the 22.5% acceptance of 1851. This 9.0% finding showed *Irish Household* lodging acceptance had come more into line with the 11.1% reported for Coventry Households. Irish lodging numbers continued to be much reduced after the sizable drop of 1861 (Table 6.4).[14] While a tiny number of married couples lodged, it was mostly practiced by the unattached. Relative to *Irish households*, Irish-born lodgers were increasingly taken-in by *English Households containing Irish* particularly in 1901, where the latter entertained 48 solo Irish lodgers compared to 11 by the former. This may have been due to greater approval of the Irish, especially as they were likely to be in workshop type employment, or because these *English Households containing Irish* were headed by second-generation, local-born Irish thus favourably disposed to the Irish. Again such heads may have been more akin to lodging house proprietors that openly accepted lodgers, or that heads of *Irish households* were rarer, or too enfeebled to take-in lodgers by the end of the century. These circumstances have been explored more closely for 1881, when detail was not yet suffused by new end-of-century arrivals, and is considered within the ambit of the Table 6.5.

There were 60 Irish-born and 63 Irishcom living under the umbrella of *English households containing Irish*. These comprised at least five very distinct households types. First were English parents of Irish-born children. This group accounted for almost a quarter of the 60 Irish-born. Newbridge, Cahir, Templemore - towns with military barracks, indicate the main reason for these children being found among Coventry's Irish-born. Their parents were proletarian, with only a solicitor, whose daughter Kathleen was born during a short family stay in Ireland, an exception. As Table 6.6 shows many children were too young to have occupations from which conclusions

[14] Kin figures included in this Table. As noted in Chapter 1 it would include a wide variety of relations with widows particularly noticeable.

might be drawn, but their characteristically English surnames suggest they could well integrate with the host community. Next were those who kept lodgers; most households kept 1 Irish-born lodger, a limit which may have been imposed by the capacity of the accommodation, but even in households where a large number of general lodgers was kept, in all cases the number of Irish-born did not exceed 2 lodgers. The 'classic' unattached young Irish-born lodgers were as might be expected present, but so too were a noticeable number of much older widowed Irish-born women and men who fell back to relying on lodging. Those over 40 years presented more in semi-skilled occupations while labouring was no longer attractive for those under 40 years as only two of same described themselves as labourers. The occupation of those offering lodgings stretched across a range of nondescript employments with those involved in public houses offering lodgings on 4 occasions. In some cases heads took lodgers with similar occupations. The quintessential Coventry occupations of the landlords suggest that many Irish could find lodgings across a broad spectrum of the population.[15]

Next there were live-in servants in these households of which 5 cases existed.[16] Finally, there was a set of households where kin resided. Two thirds of the eight cases of kin, in these households were of an Irish-born parent who was residing with their local-born 'child' whose family assumed headship. The ranking (from head of household) of the members of these families on the enumeration pages with older Irish-born listed later in a subsidiary position, indicates the sway of influence within a family had shifted to the 'child's' generation and technically, if not also in practice, the family was now an *English household containing Irish*.

Reference to Table 5.9 shows that continuing from 1841-61 there were still a small number of occasions when an *Irish Household* head's grown up child had changed marital status but still lived at home. The wide range of sub-family distinctions is obvious from the Table. So also is the frequency of the term 'Irishcom', and the mention of 'Irishcom' to 'Irishcom' marriage which indicates local-born second generation Irish had become family creators.

Birthplace

Between 1871 and 1891 the rate of county disclosure held at an average of 49.6% but in 1901 dropped back to 40.1% as revealed by Table 5.16. With cognisance of this restricted divulgence it can be noted that as in the period 1841-61 Dublin predominated

[15] Those offering lodgings on a large scale such as widower gunsmith Thomas Gaule, who took in 23 lodgers in Much Park Street, and William Cooper, a general labourer who took in 44 lodgers in West Orchard, did not identify their main occupation as lodging house keepers.
[16] In both relevant Tables for 1861 and 1881 the Catholic presbytery had coincidentally an Irish-born servant but that was not always the case over the century.

from 1871-1901, by accounting for an average of 39.0% of Irish-born. Mayo with an average of 17.1% between 1871 and 1891 continued to show as the second highest county of birth, however its 8.9% of 1901 was superseded by that of Cork with 12.5%. The counties of Roscommon, Sligo and Galway that were more prominent as birth counties at mid-century completely fell away as source areas later in the century. Belfast, under Antrim was another Irish city of birth that showed an increased presence in Coventry at the turn of the century.

An appraisal of Table 5.17 shows the gap between sons and daughters born locally and those born in Ireland remained wide during this period with that of 1871 being 17.9 times greater in favour of local-born. As local-born in the 1880s increasingly moved beyond identification as sons or daughters of Irish-born, the divide lessened to 11.2 times in 1881 and 5.3 times in 1891. It tightened further to 3.5 times in 1901 as a result of the end of century fresh arrival of Irish-born, some of whom turned up with young Irish-born sons and daughters.[17] The Table lays out information on those British counties where the Irish-born of Coventry may have previously resided as evidenced by the location of their children's birthplaces. Source areas earlier in the century, Cheshire and Derbyshire were of no importance, but the attraction of Irish-born from Chatham and Hampshire suggest ex-military personnel, seeking work in Coventry.

Age, gender balance and marital condition

The Coventry Host population in the four censuses presents a standard profile with the largest percentages in the young age-cohorts and consistent reductions in almost all columns as age increased (See Table 6.7). The Irishcom age profiles parallel, if less smoothly, those of the Coventry Host. Irishcom males did not follow the regular city trend for 1871. Some pinching in the 20-29 age ranges may have been due to local-born Irish, moving from parents' residences and from the ambit of census recognition as Irish-associated, but also some Irish males may have sought work elsewhere over the previous distressed decade. (A net loss of 167 Irishcom males occurred in the decade). There was a more pronounced value in the 40-44 age group reflecting the ageing of the 1850s influx of Irish population. In 1881 and 1891, older age groups were also slightly higher than the Coventry norm, but the largest percentage was in the age group 10-14 as if the peak child-birth years had passed a decade ago. The presence of new Irish-born in 1901, rearing their children locally, brought the age range 0-9 into alignment again with

[17] Irish-born described as sons or daughters, who were under 10 year of age, amounted to 30.0% of the total of 63.

the Coventry Host profile. Like males, females were also more represented in older age groupings compared to the Host.

The age and sex structure pyramids (Irish-born/Irishcom) Figure 6.1 graphically illustrate for 1871 how little of the pyramid base reaching to 20 years was comprised by Irish-born. Since they mostly lost their census Irish association on leaving the family home in their twenties the pyramid profile constricts sharply thereafter and the upper bars, as in other decades, are in reality embodied by mature Irish-born. The forces at work in 1871 become even more apparent in 1881. The 0-4 age-cohort at the base was in decline as fewer births emanated from this evidently ageing community. The local-born Irish of 1871 ratchet forward a decade to become subsumed in their twenties under the heading Coventry Host-born. In 1891 there is a slight strengthening of the bars in the 25-34 male cohorts reflecting a pick-up of Irish-born numbers from arrivals in this age group but generally the pyramid depicts a stagnating declining Irish-born aspect to the 'community' with Irish-born members lodged in the upper age echelons. However 1901 shows an expanding base of local-born children belonging to recent Irish-born arrivals, while above 45 years, death took its toll on the post–Famine generation leaving more diminished cohorts of Irish-born.

The Irishcom/Coventry Host relationship relayed in population pyramids is presented in Figure 6.2. The shapes for the Host population over the four censuses were broadly regular with expected declining percentages in older age-cohorts. With cognisance that a change of merely 3 to 5 Irishcom represents a 1.0% extension or contraction of an Irishcom bar, for comparison the Irishcom pyramids may be layered over the Host pyramids. For 1871 the Irishcom was generally distributed as for the city up to 20 years, after which age, numbers fell away in comparison; this pinching as suggested earlier due to difficulty of their detection in the census books or a movement elsewhere for work. From 30 years and above, where Irishcom bars, if not matched, then generally extended beyond those of the Host, the older profile of the Irishcom can be ascertained. In 1881 and 1891 this phenomenon of an ageing Irishcom can be seen with more clarity against the Host backdrops, as also the reduced number of childbirths (none from second-generation local-born Irish are catchable). In 1901 the 0-9 cohorts and the 25-44 cohorts of Irishcom representing a new infusion of Irish parents and their children into the city almost restored the general correlation between these cohorts with the city at large.

Irish-born imbalanced gender ratio of 87.6:100 (M:F) noted in 1861 continued into 1871 with 89.0:100, but in censuses thereafter became more even, and was actually

106.1:100 in favour of males in 1901 (Table 5.19). The ratios were very similar to that of the Coventry Host which favoured females throughout the four censuses and which ranged from 89.8 in 1871 to 93.6 in 1901.

The civil condition the Irishcom according to age followed a foreseeable pattern from 1871-1901 as disclosed by Table 6.8. The age group with the largest percentage of unmarried for both genders was the 15-34 age grouping. The largest percentage of married men was as might be expected in the 25-54 age grouping; with a noticeable presence in 1901, of married men in a younger 25-34 cohort. In general married females were evident from the age of 25, with the 25-34 cohort accounting for 27.0% and 30.8% in 1891 and 1901 respectively. The widowed were noticeable in the upper age-cohorts particularly above 55 years but could be found even in the 25-34 cohort. Over the four censuses widows constituted on average 14.4% of females age 15&>, with a peak of 18.3% in 1891, and there were almost twice as many of them as widowers. When compared to the Coventry Host in 1881 and 1891 there was a higher proportion of male marrieds in the older age grouping which reflected the ageing of the Irish that could be captured from the census. Irishcom widows averaged 14.4% of females age 15&> over the period which was more than the 10.8% noted for Coventry Host widows. Other findings that related to condition of the Coventry Host were not dissimilar and displayed an obvious pattern. The majority of the unmarried were under 35 years, men and women appeared ready to marry on reaching the age of 25 years, and the widowed were apparent in the age range from 55 years upwards.

Heads of Irish Households: Age and civil condition

Moving forward, as in Chapter 5, from the above figures which represents the Irish *en masse,* the data for heads of *Irish households* is now examined. It is to be seen from Table 6.9 that from 1871-1901 married heads constituted the bulk of heads of *Irish households* with an average of 81.4%. In 1871 there were but 44 heads whose spouses had died in a household total of 254 (17.3%), but in 1891 in the lowest number of recorded households (149) for any decade of the century there were 45 such heads. These widows and widowers now represented 30.2% of household heads in 1891 indicating how as time progressed death was increasing the non-partnered percentage of *Irish households*. In 1871, the peak age-cohort for married male and female heads was 35-44 followed by 45-54, however by 1881 and also in 1891 the peak was 45-54. Rejuvenation can be detected in 1901 when the peak age for married male heads was the lower 25-34 followed by 35-44. The ageing character of male married *Irish household* heads by 1881 is to be noted when comparison is made with male Coventry

Host heads. For the age-cohort 25-34 the Irish percentage was much weaker than for the Coventry Host, the same for 35-44, but higher for subsequent cohorts. Women who were heads were mainly widows and their accounting for 8.8 % of all household heads in 1861 was continued with conspicuity into later decades with 16.3% of households headed by a widow in 1881. In the same year a lesser 11.8% of Coventry Host households were headed by widows.

Occupation and social classification

General findings

Turning to social classification, Table 6.10 reveals the dominance of Class 3 for both Irish-born and Irishcom. In 1881 and 1891 half of active Irishcom males were found in Class 3 and therein too an even larger percentage of females. However the reservations expressed in the previous chapter about the attribution of some activities to Class 3 and particularly in 1901, where arguably some relatively skilled work in cycle production was directed to Class 4, means that it was only for Classes 1, 2 and 5 that sharp social distinction can be inferred. Class 1 rose slightly to 4.7% in the final two decades but remained a small category. Class 2 contained almost 10.0% of the active Irishcom by 1901 which was an impressive doubling of the 5.2% found in 1871. For Irish-born, Class 5 as a category had also fallen in significance to 19.0% in 1901 from earlier decade percentages of between 30-40%, perhaps due to a surfeit of semi-skilled opportunities in the cycle trade making a Class 5 occupation more easily avoided.

Occupation and social classification: Irish-born heads of Irish Households

The more satisfying procedure as noted in Chapter 5 is to consider social classification in terms of *Irish household* heads, thus avoiding the inclusion of young persons in the textile industry whose occupational title warranted Class 3 but potentially rather than immediately deserved such attribution. Table 6.11 illustrates that very few men and a small number of widows found themselves in the residual Class X. Prominent throughout the period was Class 3 which in 1871 accounted for 51.3% of married males, though by 1901 it had reduced to 35.4%, at whose expense Class 4 and Class 2 appear to have increased. Over the four censuses the general trend for married male heads was for Class 4 to increase while Class 5 decreased. Taken together from 1871-1901 Classes 4 and 5 averaged 43.4% of the totals arising from the six class groupings and indicate that, as could be noticed even in the middle of the century, the majority of active *Irish household* heads in Coventry were not classed as unskilled or semi-skilled. The Table teased out figures for Non-Irish-born heads of *Irish Households* (who were all married and male). These show for this group prominence across the

decades in Class 3 with light representation in Class 5. In 1881 while the Class 3 share of male married heads of *Irish Households* who were Irish-born was 27.6% for Non-Irish-born it was 69.0%, the latter as might be expected came closer to the Coventry Host Households Heads 56.9%. Also in the same year of comparison, and with respect for the large difference in quanta, a more significant 36.5% of male married Irish-born heads of *Irish Households* are found in Class 5 than the 7.6% of the Host. Female figures seemed too low to permit conclusions to be drawn but the significant number of widows is noticeable.

Irish-born heads of Irish Households: Classes 1 and 2

Table 6.12 is a continuation of Table 5.24 and outlines the Irish-born male and female heads of *Irish Households* assigned to Classes 1 and 2 on the basis of occupation or employment of extra staff 1881-1901.[18] Brief, but interesting biographical, notes on a selection of those, marked by (*), who engaged with the town in these decades, are found in Appendix 2. Clergyman Cuffe remained in Coventry but Monahan and Mills seeking better livings moved on. Medical practitioners Fenton & Rice stayed but Bullen and Callaghan left. Sinclair, Stephens and Maloney stayed while managerial/manufacturing opportunity presented itself in the cycle trade but these restless persons did not settle. There appears a short-term, disengaged attitude towards Coventry from those who did not settle, but against that observation may be mentioned the action of Callaghan who became a Conservative councillor during his short stay. Association outside of their collegial circle with the Irish majority did not seem to feature in their sojourns in Coventry and indeed Harmer who was Irish-born did not appear to attach any significance to that fact.

Irish-born heads of Irish Households: Class 3

Table 6.13 is an exposition of those Irish-born *Irish Household* heads found in Class 3, not uplifted to Class 2 under Armstrong's recommendations.[19] This Table also included details on Non-Irish-born heads (married to Irish-born women) which show there was a raised presence, identified in the previous chapter, of Non-Irish-born male heads in Class 3 constituting a larger proportion of all Non-Irish-born headed *Irish households* than did Irish-born heads in Class 3 in relation to all Irish-born heads. The raised presence did however decline over the decades to 41.5% in 1901. For all, weaving and tailoring fell away from their importance at mid-century. Shoemaking held its place into the 1880s. Watch and cycle production, though best viewed in conjunction

[18] Females 'living on own means' should be ignored in this context since the Class placing did not match the reality of these elderly women who were most likely surviving on a small pension.
[19] 1871 was excluded in order to provide a roomier Table layout.

with Class 4, did not attract significant interest. By the end of the century, dealing in its many forms had lost appeal while clerical work gained in relevance.

Allocation of occupations of Irish-born and Irishcom males according to Booth's principles

In a turning from a presentation of Irish-born and Irishcom according to Classes based on their occupation to a presentation where their occupations are relevantly grouped for the period 1841-1901 (Table 6.14), Armstrong again facilitates. He furnishes Booth's occupational headings and allocations thereto, and he provides a list of a wide range of occupations with their most suitable placing under Booth's headings.[20] One point of difference, compared to the previous social classification method of allocation, was that pensioners could not assume the class of their occupation before retirement but were treated as dependents. The Table regrettably does not make for a differentiation between employer and employee, or distinguish levels of skill. The corn cutter and the surgeon all found their way into 'Professional Service – Medicine'. However it does serve to illustrate the wide range of activities the Irish engaged in, and to codify and condense the cumbrous material within a national taxonomy.

Noticeable in volume are agricultural labourers, building operatives and general labourers (recorded under 'Industrial service: Labour'). In these activities Irish-born figures generally matched Irishcom, indicating these activities were not followed by a local-born generation of Irishcom.[21] This is in contrast to watchmaking which was more popular among the local-born Irish. All forms of silk working were strongly represented among Irish-born and amplified in Irishcom figures; but so too is the fall away over the later decades. Dress covered a range of occupations that interested the Irish, such as that of clothier, tailor, boot and shoe maker. Griffin remarked these were the skilled occupations most easily entered but that accessibility particularly in tailoring led to oversupply and unemployment.[22] Dealing was a consistent activity across the decades but as the similar Irishcom figures show, it remained a practice of the Irish-born.

The activities of women which were more confined than for males, listed under Booth's headings, are relayed in Table 6.15. The silk and, from 1867, cotton employments, while attracting Irish-born, engaged local-born Irish to an even greater extent (three times greater in 1871); the fall off noticed in later years for males, also occurring among females. Factory cotton weaving was an activity that can be pinned

[20] Armstrong, Use of information about occupation pp. 247-310
[21] Irish-born are always a subset of Irishcom
[22] Griffin, *Liberty's Dawn*, p. 33

down to one location in 1871, in a manner that for silk working is not easily achieved.[23] Referring to the Irish female presence in cotton activity in 1871, there were 6 Irish-born and 17 local-born Irish working as cotton reelers/spinners/weavers/winders. The Irish-born were described as: 'wife', 'daughter', 'sister-in-law', and on three occasions 'lodger'. However, all but one, of the 17 local-born Irish were described as 'daughter' and ranged in age from 13 to 20 years.[24] This indicates that the second generation Irish from a young age were immersed in the local industrial milieu and were sufficiently settled in the city to take up employment in a manufactory. While it appears that they were acceptable as workers, this type of factory production was becoming feminised and possibly they were accepted because they tolerated low pay and the demanding working conditions that deterred others.[25]

Dress, covered those who were dressmakers, seamstresses and milliners, also included the area of boot binding (of whom 6 or 25% of that category were engaged in 1851). It fell away over the decades as an activity among Irish-born but maintained some importance among local-born Irish. Women were noticeably involved up to 1881 in dealing, which covered hawking, but it appears a particularly Irish-born favoured activity and had little cachet among local-born Irish. Domestic service was an important source of employment in the middle decades but numbers engaged in it declined, both because the number of new migrants declined but also presumably as the young women engaged in service left on marriage to rear a family. In 1901, showing an increase of 50.0% on the previous decade to 18, all but one, of the Irish-born female domestic servants were single, and 15 were under 30 years of age. It may not have been that popular a choice of occupation. Hunt noted that at a meeting of unemployed women in Coventry, albeit following the Great War, 65.0% asserted that 'they would not take domestic service under any circumstances, with 30.0% prepared to do so if they could live out and finish their day at six in the evening'.[26]

Charring and laundering, which came under the heading 'Extra service' though in decline, held appreciable numbers into the 1890s because of the continued presence of a

---

[23] One but possibly more. There is reference to a cotton factory in Sandy Lane being burnt down in 1890 but when it first opened is unclear, though obviously before 1871. It was part of the Leigh Mills Company based in Hill Street where some cotton weaving may have taken place. OS Map 1889 Warwickshire Sheet 21.12; http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Leigh_Mills_Co:_1920 Accessed 28th May 2017

[24] The 'all but one' was 30 year old Ann Gurnan described as 'wife' who was born in Birmingham. One of the 16 'local-born Irish' daughters was born in Derby. There was also six males under 20 years similarly employed and described as sons; five were born locally and one in Dublin.

[25] Cathy Hunt, *The National Federation of Women Workers, 1906-1921* (Basingstoke 2015) p. 140; However there is also the possibility that these represented the extent of acceptability because, of the females between 10 and 20 years who were not described as scholars, 16 gave no occupational details and were classed as dependent.

[26] Hunt, *Federation of Women Workers, 1906-1921*, p. 157

number, if now ageing, Irish-born women who had known no other work during their lifetime. Almost half in this category (16 of 33 Irishcom) in 1881 were 50 years or over in age. A sizable percentage of females was dependent; they represented 37.2% of Irishcom females, aged 15 or older, in 1871. The corresponding figure for 1891 was higher at 48.9%.

The above male and female activities draw notice because of their volume especially in earlier decades. There was also evidence that new manufacturing activity and expansion of clerical jobs was attracting fresh Irish-born and local Irish at the end of the century. For males, under the heading 'Manufacture-Machinery', cycle and pneumatic tyre production emerged as significant in 1891 engaging 13 Irish-born (37 Irishcom) and by 1901 had trebled to employ 40 Irish-born (62 Irishcom). Also expanding was the number of accountants or clerks ('Industrial Service') of which there were 14 Irish-born (19 Irishcom). Post office, excise and revenue work ('Public Service') was attended to by 6 Irish-born (7 Irishcom). Women were also involved in cycle/tyre production with 3 Irish-born (13 Irishcom) in 1901. Females found increased opportunities in teaching ('Public Service') from 1881, with 10 Irish-born (12 Irishcom) so engaged in 1901. There was an uplift in nursing provision involving 8 (9 Irishcom) and 2 Irish-born found employment as typists ('Industrial Service') – an activity mentioned for the first time.[27] Engagement in these activities meant sharing the same work environments with other Coventry residents and must have aided integration.

There were also Irish-born present in low volumes in professions whose prestige may have engendered a wider approval for all born in Ireland than the meagreness of their professional numbers might suggest. In 1901, apart from 4 Irish-born physicians, there were 5 male Irish-born in religion; four were Church of England clergymen and one was a Roman Catholic priest.

Finally the underlying assumption is that the natural trend to anticipate is one of upward mobility. The migrant however may have attained greater stability and security and occupational fulfilment while remaining within a particular class. This progressive consolidation e.g. from outdoor labourer to indoor porter, or from agricultural labourer to gardener, if merely a lateral movement within a class band, may represent a significant achievement for an individual generation. Also, the progress into old age

[27] Motor car manufacture that commenced in Coventry in 1896 was so novel that census officials abstracting information from enumeration pages of 1901 could be seen in three cases involving Irishcom to overwrite with the word 'cycle' occupational references mentioning motor as in 'Motor works engineer', 'Motor car maker', or Motor fitter. RG13/2906.27.24 ED 2; RG13/2908.81.10 ED 22; RG13/2911.13.17 ED 10

necessitated adjustment to less onerous work and for many a decline in economic standing.

It also assumes the migrant is readily identifying with the native conception of progress along the socio-economic scale. Migrants may have had their own markers of achievement and may have taken satisfaction out of living modest, non-aspirational Catholic lives. Ziesler cautions about dismissing slight gains in occupational mobility. Though superficial in advance, employment in a factory offered the benefits of security and less exposure to harsh weather.[28] In a downturn - and Coventry suffered cyclical recessions - to hold one's social class may be an achievement. Any advancement through occupation would depend on the soundness of the occupation at its uptake. To take up work in silk weaving as an occupation might have seemed like progress in 1851 but the same action commenced ten years later after the collapse of the silk trade in 1860 would appear retrogressive.

Intergenerational change

Finally to obtain a sense of the degree of intergenerational occupational change and possible social advance, for 1901 a comparison was made between the occupation of fathers with an Irish association i.e. Irishcom, and that of their eldest co-resident son if aged 15 years or above.[29] There were 23 such fathers: 16 were born in Ireland, all of the remainder had Irish-born wives. In only two cases did the son follow the father's occupation directly i.e. as a coalminer and as a draper. The influence of the cycle industry was pervasive with some fathers and sons both engaged in the industry. In some cases there was a sense of the labouring tradition being maintained where a general labourer son worked as iron founder, or a gardener's son worked as a labourer. However in the case of other labouring fathers, their sons took advantage of openings in cycle workshops, although in these the work had a physical element to it. In this comparison these sons of 1901 had to their advantage opportunities in this field not

[28] Ziesler, *Irish in Birmingham*, p. 130

[29] All unmarried sons. Of Irish-born fathers, only 1 had a son born in Ireland and paired: Bicycle rim maker/Clerk (cycle factory). The remaining sons were born in Britain paired father and son as: Stonemasons labourer/Cycle cleaner; General dealer/Range fitter; General labourer/Iron founder; Watch jewel maker/Cycle wheel maker; Draper shopkeeper/Drapers assistant; General labourer/Cycle machinist; Gardener/Labourer; Shoe maker/Machinist burner; Cycle brazier/Motor car driver; Silk weaver/Machinist; Coal miner/Coal miner; Ribbon weaver/Tram car conductor; Mill engine driver/Coal? carm; Cycle tool maker/Motor fitter - cycle; Retired farmer/Grocer's assistant.
There were four Coventry-born fathers all with Coventry-born sons and they paired: Railway goods porter/Cycle brazier; Trimming manufacture/Machinist iron planer; Window cleaner/Fried fish dealer; Watch cap maker/Agent, tea salesman; Watch jeweller/Engineer mechanical.
There was one Birmingham-born father pairing with a Coventry-born son: Railway goods porter/Cycle brazier. One Berkswell, Warwickshire-born father pairing with a Coventry-born son: Watch finisher/Bricklayer. Finally there was one Oxfordshire-born father pairing with a Birmingham-born son: Tailors manager/Mechanical Draughtsman. The sons ranged in age from 15 to 43 with only 6 over 30 years; as many were youthful they may have changed their occupation as they grew older.

presented to sons in earlier decades. Fathers with traditional skills of weaving, shoe making and watch jewel making, were not emulated by the sons, who were involved in transport orientated occupations. While there was some movement from unskilled to semi-skilled, the occupations followed remained within the ambit of Classes 3, 4 and 5.

Four generation case study of the Doran family

This is provided in Appendix 12 which illustrates the complexity of family response in Coventry. It outlines development and directions taken, reaction to the challenges of early death, to finding employment, and to commitment to the city.

Spatial Expresion 1881

Table 6.16 furnishes the spatial distribution for both Irish-born and Irishcom, with the latter depicted in Maps 6.1 and 6.2. The most significant share of Irishcom in the city lived in: M40:Well with 6.8% or 57 Irishcom, M47:New Buildings 5.8% or 48, M46:Palmer Lane with 5.3% or 44 and M62:Tower/Henry with 4.1% or 34. The 3% to 4% tier, with 25 to 33 Irishcom was taken by M:41Upper Well, M39:West Orchard, M:56Adelaide and M:11Cow Lane. The 1881 EA representation cannot be compared directly with that for 1861 since the areal coverage of EAs depicted by both censuses diverged significantly in parts of the city, and the 1861 quantum was reduced in 1881 by 56.2%. This given, what may be rendered is that M39:West Orchard lost its prominence of share of city Irishcom with an 1861 share of 7.8% or 116 Irishcom now reduced to 3.1% or 26 Irishcom. M13:Warwick Lane also fell away in share and in numerical importance from 4.9%, 73 Irishcom to 1.8%, 15 Irishcom. M:39West Orchard was subject to commercial and industrial intrusion which may account for it 90 Irishcom fall in twenty years. Sleepy secondary streets and Lanes appeared to retain their 1861 totals with more success. In 1881 then, M40:Well and M47:New Buildings, M46:Palmers Lane and M41:Upper Well appeared to continue as core neighbourhoods of Irish residence. Elsewhere in the city there was adjustment. Fro example if M11:Much Park 26C, shown on the Map for 1861, is combined with M10:Much Park, then together they are matched with the generally equivalent area in 1881 represented by M6:London Rd, it can be noticed city share of Irishcom had declined from 5.3% (78) to 1.6% (13). M56:Adelaide in 1881 contained 27 Irishcom which signified a lift of Irishcom in the general area of Hillfields. Some gain in outer EAs may be observed but in fact the threshold in moving upward from one category to another was small; 8 Irishcom to enter the 1.0 < 2.0% range and 17 Irishcom to enter the 2.0 < 3.0% ranking. Further, these are Irishcom statistics and it is to be recognised that the underlying Irish-born figure on which the Irishcom was supported could supply varied results. For example

taking 6 as specific number, the 6 Irish-born in: M56:Adelaide returned 27 Irishcom, M55Albert 13 Irishcom and M19:Gosford [64-106] 7, which ensuring different levels of categorisation and representations on Map 6.2. This type of 'expansion' between the Irish-born and Irishcom percentages as measured against total Irishcom in the city showed itself at < 1.0% in 37 EAs, in 17 => 1.0%, in 4 => 2.0% and in M46:Palmer Lane and M47:New Buildings 4.4% and 3.2% respectively.

The location quotient of EAs shown in Map 6.3 reveals the Irishcom were relatively under-represented beyond the central EAs, where they were over represented; M46:Palmer Lane, M47:New Buildings, M40:Well and M12:Greyfriars Lane being particularly so. The first two EAs recently mentioned also marked themselves out as EAs of Irish focus by containing the highest numbers, 12 and 7 respectively, of the city's 52 Irishcom lodgers; the largest number that could be mustered by any other EA was 3 lodgers. Map 6.4 expresses the areal distribution of married heads of *Irish households* by their birthplace and that of their spouse. There were 124 such marriages; 36 marriages consisted of both partners being Irish-born, 46 where an Irish-born was married to a British-born female and 46 where a British-born was married to an Irish female. The tripartite division showing an increasingly integrationist balance, when expressed by area, revealed the number of Irish-born/Irish-born and Irish-born/ British-born relationships were more noticeable in the core Irish EAs of M41:Upper Well, M40:Well, M13:Warwick Lane and M46:Palmer Lane. However Irish-born women in 46 British-born headed marriages, 29.0% of the total, that might be perceived as the more integrated of the three categories, were to be found to the west, east and north-east of the city. Their presence in all these areas indicated that these Irish-born women (and their children) had the capacity to live anywhere in the wider city and were in a more integrative 'suburban' milieu.

Spatial Expresion 1901

For 1901 Table 6.17 furnishes the areal distribution for both Irish-born and Irishcom, with the latter depicted in Maps 6.5 and 6.6 which take account of municipal expansion to the east and north. Compared to the relevant distribution for 1881 shown in Map 6.2 the relaxation of density in the old core areas, the finding of relatively higher values farther from the centre, and a presence to the north is marked. The Irish were more diffused and had some representation in mosts EAs. They were still noticable in old areas like MP6:Whitefriar/MP St., and M:28Well St. Their settlement pattern now was the consequence of the intrusion of industry and commercial activity into the city centre causing people to reside in streets beyond it. Irish-born, noted in brackets, were

found in EAs to the east which housed a large number of cycle and associated manufacturies (Map 6.8[30]). These were - M50:Alma/Raglan St (13) which contained the Dunlop Pneumatic Tyre Co, M51:Paynes Lane (18), M56:EastSt/South St (13), and M53:Jesson/Priory St (13). M17:Queens Rd, with 24 Irish-born (44 Irishcom) requires mention. This residentially superior EA contained Irish-born like the Tukes, Harmers, Callaghans, Sinclairs and McVeaghs, indicating Irish-born were quite prepared to be residentially selective if their circumstances permitted.

The location quotient for 1901 shown in Map 6.7 reveals Irishcom were relatively over represented in central EAs, and while under-represented beyond, maintained some proportionate presence in most EAs of the city. Those now with 2.0 or above were - M1:Broadgate, M10:Cow Lane, N17:Queens Rd, M23:Holyhead Road, M24:Hill St, M36:Leicester St, M57:Derby Lane/Freeth; and M58:Far Gosford 88-168. The degree of overrepresentation had fallen in central EAs when indicitavely compared to 1881. It is to be recalled that this representation was for a specific census at century end; the nature and pattern of the dispersal that had occurred earlier in the century by mature second-generations of local-born Irish remains elusive.

[30] Part of Warwickshire Sheet 21.12 Second Edition 1906

Chapter 7

Conclusion

Over the century inward migration occurred in three distinct and distinctive waves; this phenomenon should not obscure the fact there was also individual, 'accidental', and 'eventual' Irish arrivals. In the Coventry setting it was revealed there was an interplay of factors that shaped migrant experience. These were the innate temperament of the city, its environmental salubrity, its economic underpinning, and its changing fortunes. Further, there was the import of the decision by migrants to specifically select Coventry, the scale and propitiousness of timing of inflow and outflow, of cultural compatibility with the host population, and migrant wherewithal that dictated residential location. To this was added the disposition of the migrants that may have been influenced by alike regional origin and the nature of their desire to live close to one another for mutual support. Another relevant shaping factor was the degree of intra-migrant class and social accordance. Permeating this localised mixture were national attitudes which gratuitously disparaged the Irish character and in essence believed the Irish should 'know their place'.[1] Additionally, local sentiment until the 1870s was suffused by national dislike of the Church to which many migrants adhered. Extraneously directed alarms and promotions either relating to the quest for Ireland's self-destiny, or that of the Church e.g. the bull *Universalis Ecclesiae* issued in 1850, had potential to directly or indirectly affect migrant relationship with the host population.[2] There were too, the grounding effects from gaining 'social experience' and family commitments which only the elapse of time could bring about. Finally there was available for the majority of migrants the strong service of the local Catholic Church, in existential terms by extolling beliefs that gave life direction and purpose, and in providing social support through its functions and lay agencies.[3] Outplay of all these forces determined the structure of the Coventry Irish 'community', its residential expression, degree of distinctness, sense of common purpose and sustainability.

The general effect in the city of the elapse of the century was exposed in this study (Appendix 18). The borough, with the Irish therein, benefitted from increased municipal regulation of sanitation and identification of conditions that influenced the

---

[1] This indigenous sense that the Saxon was superior to an inferior Celt was according to Gardner a racist attitude that lay at the root of the Home Rule struggle. (Steve Garner, *Racism in the Irish Experience* (London 2004) p. 127).

[2] Incipit of the papal bull 29th September 1850 restoring the Catholic Hierarchy. It could be suggested that the writing of the text in Latin as was normal, was enough for the Church to be seen by it opponents as having an alien attitude.

[3] Kitson Clark, *Making of Victorian England*, p. 196 refers to religion giving shape and meaning to many lives without which there was none.

spread of zymotic diseases.[4] The choleraic 1830s and 1840s were a different environment to the more aseptically aware 1900s. The Irish were now conveyed, along with everybody else in the city, through the years of social reform and change. Resonating with aptness for Coventry, was Gilley's observation that in the mass of Victorian social reporting Irish migrants were but a minor theme and especially after 1870 'when all consciousness of the Irish poor in England as a special social problem requiring special solution quickly dies away'.[5]

The extension of franchise in 1867 was to the advantage of Irish standing; through involvement in mainstream decision-making they became stakeholders in society. This involvement helped, in Goodhart's words relating to the integration of migrants to move the population from seeing the Irish as 'they' and to regard them as part of the 'us'.[6] With Irish working-class men in a position to vote and reputedly holding enough votes to sway a result, the editor of the *Standard* must have reflected on the negative effect on the Tory party of his paper continuing to denigrate the Irish at large or the Catholic Church.

The march of time saw progress in transport methods - the decline of the stagecoach and the popularity of the bicycle affected Coventry in their own, very significant ways. The kind of employment that attracted early migrants would over time, not remain the employment that would uphold them in the city. Over the century earlier cultural distance reduced and the Irish on wearing clothes purchased locally became even less visually distinguishable. They were also more in local accord as the Celtic cadence lessened and familiarity with local speech pattern and idioms increased. For the Irish, time took care of overcrowding, clustering, and pre-industrial customs. Features that caused social disadvantage were surmounted; they were inducted into self-restraint and discipline, through following factory rules, and to cleanliness and hygiene if they took-up as servants, laundresses and chars. To borrow a phrase employed by Fitzpatrick, time gave poor Irish 'a shove up the ladder of civilization'.[7] Although the scenarios, involving distrust and defiance, would never completely disappear they seemed to recede over time in the city. On St. Patrick's Day 1847 a reveller in the Graziers Arms told an officious constable who complained of the commotion, that he would make as much noise as he pleased.[8] That example of an early cultural streak of

---

[4] Evans said on practical grounds the Public Health Act of 1875 could qualify as the greatest Parliamentary Act of the century. (R.J. Evans, *The Victorian Age 1815-1914* (London 1968) p. 198).
[5] Gilley, English Attitudes p. 102
[6] David Goodhart, More immigration means less integration, *Standpoint* Issue 77, November 2015 p. 30
[7] Fitzpatrick, A curious middle place, p. 45
[8] *Coventry Standard* 26th March 1847

defiance towards laws made by others was less easily found toward the century end. Vice's observation in 1853 relating to an Irish lodging house in White Friars Street, that he could never discover how many lodgers were kept, had in that period revealed an innate Irish wariness, due to their colonial history, of the enquiries of those in authority.[9] Perhaps some wariness might have remained but overall it would appear an outmoded remark if made later in the century.

Time took its mortal toll on the Famine era generation, a part of which, by engaging in dubious anti-social behaviour had manifested Irish lifestyle as troubled. As adjudged later in this chapter the Catholic Church helped over time to bring the Irish into respectability, while itself had the benefit of a changing societal outlook that involved reduced antipathy towards it and its adherents.

Crucially time's elapse, provided, migrants with social capital and social memory gained through sharing with the native population in the maturation of the city. Those Irish, or whose parents, were present in the city during the harsh early 1860s were in a position to represent themselves within the shared city memory of notable hardship.[10] When migrants died they were interred in Coventry, deepening in the eyes of their remaining family the city's domiciliary role. In this regard Fielding's observation is appealing: 'most became enmeshed in the banalities of everyday life, such as marriage, raising a family and trying to make ends meet'.[11] The Irish over time no longer felt they were sojourning in the city but began to belong to it - they were 'of the city' - they were not simply Irish, they were Coventry Irish.[12]

Chapter 2 provided a spatial, environmental and economic assessment of the city in order to properly contextualise the Irish experience and showed that the Irish experience was not unique; they initially resided in a city where many were in distress. It was a city where poor and crowded streets had a reputation as such before the Irish arrived post-Famine and gravitated towards them. Garner noted the nineteenth century tendency to take a moralistic view that disease was divine punishment for the type of degenerate lifestyle the Irish led.[13] That cholera had broken out in Coventry 1832 (prior

---

[9] *Coventry Herald* 22nd July 1853

[10] McLean believed the sincerity of his remarks in 1859, referred to in Appendix 2, was proven by his stating to loud cheers he was 'an Irishman that had been with them 40 years, and he was jealous of their rights and liberties as any among them, and if the defence of their liberties required it, he would mount a breach with any of them'.

[11] Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, pp. 36, 37

[12] 'Of the city' was a phrase used in local marriage announcements to describe those who were from Coventry.

[13] Garner, *Racism in the Irish Experience*, p. 118. The *Coventry Standard* 12th November 1847 quoted Dr John Ryan, Catholic Bishop of Limerick as saying:

to any serious inward movement of Irish) meant the basis for such a sententious view of the Irish could have had little validity to Coventrians in the light of the city's own experience.

The temperament of the early nineteenth century town could be described with some reservation as innately individualistic, deferential and tolerant. Searby's analysis outlined a settled pattern to local society adducing it to the linkage between paternalism, weaving and freemen's privileges which led to deference, and the attainment of objectives by persuasion, through meetings or strikes, rather than by violence. Relative to Leicester he saw trade in Coventry as prosperous which allowed weavers to rise in status and for the aspirations and values of the middle-classes to be adopted. To him Coventry was to some extent like Birmingham, the archetypal example of the permeation of the working class by a middle-class ethos.[14] Prest agreed, remarking that 'a wide franchise and a small town put the working class on a level with other classes'.[15] This would change over the years when the industrial revolution came to Coventry but it came later than for elsewhere and domestic production by out-weavers of an independent spirit was more significant for longer in Coventry. Thus for Coventry its local character had a particular benign influence on migrant reception and adaption. McLean remarked in 1859 that there 'never was a more loyal and docile people than the people of Coventry till this agitation [relating to silk trade]'.[16] It is to be noticed that the 'crowd' could exist, with the risk to the Irish that such might beget. However gatherings

---

> 'Whilst [Irish] society is thus deranged, and the condition of men open to an improvement and every day growing worse and worse, the Almighty God looks down with sorrow on the earth, and instead of sending down His Blessings, will shower down curses and affliction on wicked men. If the people of this country had not fallen back to a state of wickedness and depravity, and forgotten in their vices their Christian obligations, how is it possible that in a land like Ireland, blessed with fertility, glorious in the produce of nature, and ample in its natural resources, the poorer classes should be steeped in such wretchedness and misery.'

This was but a quotation from his fuller remarks which condemned as wicked the cold greed of landlords and the knavish indolence and apathy of many tenants, and which urged both parties to pull together in a friendly alliance. The *Standard* while acknowledging the clarity of his remarks then used the opportunity in publishing them to ask why the Catholic clergy had not acted to repress disorder. The paper noted how clergy encouraged the poverty stricken Irish to contribute to the Repeal rent. It accused the clergy of seldom pointing out the real causes of distress, and of telling the populace that there was no sympathy from the Imperial Legislature; a sympathy which they maintained only a domestic parliament could offer. It then, in a swelling crescendo, centred on the perceived power of the clergy and the deeply held fear that the integrity of the Empire might be at risk wrote:

> 'It is not, however, only acts of omission which are chargeable upon the body of men possessing this power, and wielding this influence over the ignorant masses under their sway. It is not merely that they have neglected to excite the gratitude of their flocks for the timely aid so often afforded them by the benevolence of England. It is not either, that they have assisted in wringing from the needy their weekly pence to swell the aggregate sum collected for the seditious purpose of dismembering the empire. They are directly charged with impelling these wretched people to the commission of crime.'

[14] Searby, Chartists and Freemen, pp. 764, 770, 776
[15] Prest, Industrial Revolution in Coventry, p. 139
[16] Appendix 2 Thomas McLean, *Coventry Times* 25th May 1859

outlined in Appendix 16 did not centre on religion or ethnic issues but more on spectacle or trade disputes.[17] The receptive mood of Coventry appeared to strongly contrast with nearby Leicester's antipathy to the Irish as depicted by Danaher.

Following consideration of the reasons for the increase of Irish in the city, their state on arrival and their interaction with the city the following conclusions could be made. Its staging point position on the London to Liverpool or Holyhead route had early significance, similar to the role observed by Herson that a stopping point played in Stafford. Coventry's role as a resting stop for Irish travellers diminished with the ability of railways to whisk passengers travelling from the northwest to London, around it via Stafford and Rugby, or permitted passengers on the route between Birmingham and London to reach their destination so quickly that a resting stop in intermediate Coventry became unnecessary. Just like the stage-coaches travelling to Holyhead helped raise the profile of Ireland locally, so did the cavalry barracks with its high Irish-born content. The calming significance of the presence of the barracks in the very centre of the town, it is suggested, has not heretofore been grasped. It very rarely intruded on civic matters or industrial disputes but its very existence was a reminder of the state's ultimate power and thus helped preserve an overarching placidity. Even theoretical consideration by the civilian Irish of gathering in large scale confrontation with the police would have been ruled out and deemed foolish in the light of the army presence. The same reflection may have crossed the mind of those who may have given thought to collectively confronting the Irish.[18] Coventry did not have any magnetic attraction. It was a silk weaving town which meant that general textile weavers did not seek it out. It had reputation for drabness, with trade depressions causing deplorable distress and nearby Birmingham offered better prospects. For much of the century Coventry seemed set in its ways, cautious of industrial dynamic and appeared a city that it was as easy to uproot from as it was to settle down in.

The reception given to Dublin silk workers on their arrival, from the later 1820s is insufficiently documented to permit scrutiny. The absence of evidence displaying local concern could suggest that new entrants did not cause panic; the vernacular speaking, skilled, metropolitan, but humble background of the migrants outweighed reservations. They were also mature perhaps with less of the headstrongness of youth that could

---

[17] Daniel M. Jackson, *Popular opposition to Irish Home Rule in Edwardian Britain*, (Liverpool 2009) p. 5. He outlined how crowds might be classified ranging from, mob gatherings, to people gathered in common to proclaim their cause. Spectacle refers to election-time riots, public executions, military drills, and farewells to men transported by the authorities.

[18] The Coventry cavalry were called to Birmingham during its riots in 1867. (*Birmingham Journal* 22nd June 1867).

recklessly strain local equilibrium; the average age of the 77 Irish-born male weavers was 38.9 years in 1841. Relatively generous outdoor relief given to locals may have prevented any deeper resentment from hardening in the depressed Coventry of those years. That it was an all-round traumatic time for Irish weavers may be gauged from an 1830 report from Manchester stating: 'We have had within these ten days an inundation of the most wretched looking Irish weavers we ever saw, in search of work…the poor creatures are in great distress.'[19] Dublin silk workers may not have arrived as an 'inundation' in Coventry and thus raised less disquiet. They may have come in a sporadic fashion having first sojourned in Congleton, Macclesfield, or Derby. Weaving in the 1830s was still a domestic activity in Coventry and so the incomers were not utilised in the undermining of strikes, and thus subject to local resentment.[20] They may have been seen as part of the general in-movement of people to the city at this time. It may have been realised locally, as the letters of Thomas McLean show, that an attractive quality of these Irish weavers, was their desire to become involved with the weaving issues of concern to the local population and their desire to raise children properly. Overall this wave - if that designation is appropriate given that by 1841 only 1.4% (437) of the total population of Coventry were Irish-born - was small, but it did familiarise Coventrians with Irish migrants in a non-threatening manner that cushioned acceptance of the next more turbulent wave.

Coventry endured serious cyclic depressions caused by lack of demand or strikes. However in the 1840s and 1850s, with production increasingly powered by steam, it was on the whole a relatively thriving period. The arrival of the Famine era migrants in that ambience may not have caused an economic worry to city denizens especially since the largely rural migrants were unlikely to immediately engage in weaving activity and thus threaten local accords in the trade.[21] That some were low Irish was tolerated as part of the burden which all towns had no option but to accept. The town was aware from

---

[19] *Drogheda Journal* 11th May 1830

[20] Mulkern presumably referring to powered, factory based manufacture, stated that ribbon manufacturers, who also controlled the domestic weaving trade, did not replace native weavers through the employment of cheap Irish labour. This was a cause of tension in northern towns. (Mulkern, Irish and Public Disorder in Coventry, p. 129).

[21] Perhaps not economic alarm but concern over health. John Gulson Chairman of the Workhouse Directors wrote to the Poor Law Commissioners on 26th May 1847 concerned that the numerous Irish tramps calling at the workhouse for lodgings would bring the fever with them. He sought sanction for obtaining a separate building to house them. The clerk of the workhouse informed the Commissioners on 9th June 1847 that they had been unable to hire a building for the reception of 'Irish Tramps' and that having 2 or 3 'Irish fever' cases they had been compelled to erect a male ward and a female ward on some land adjoining but isolated from the workhouse. During the month Frances Green was appointed nurse but she became ill with fever and an assistant nurse had to be appointed. This is largely the extent of information on the local effects of the arrival of Irish at this period found in the National Archives. (MH 12/13378 Coventry 496 Correspondence with Poor law Unions).

local newspapers of the desperation in Ireland that propelled an outflow of its natives. The depiction of wretched living conditions and behaviour of some of these Celtic Irish in Coventry bore a similarity to that of many other cities, large and small. These residential conditions were associated with the Irish but they already existed in Coventry before the arrival of Famine migrants.

The tendency to overcrowd, that accelerated clustering, was reduced by pro-active municipal inspection of lodging arrangements. Central space at mid-century in this compact town was not then clearly zoned by activity function; residential was jumbled in with the industrial, ecclesiastical, and commercial. Thus they noticeably lived (as did the host population) in courts off alleyways, lanes and side-streets, a few steps away from the core street spine that contained business, commercial and civic buildings, and also three Established Church buildings.[22] The city was compact which may provide a reason why these Irish appear to be live closer to the heart of the city than may have been anticipated.

The Irish initially settled in close-by streets due to the comfort of familiarity and shelter offered by fellow Irish but largely it was the result of economic determinism. Though they liked residing with those who originated in Ireland, the Irish did not seek in a fundamental manner to live residentially separate from the host population, or to avoid 'marrying out' in order to protect a traditional culture distant from the majority population. However they seemed to like living without official intereference and many did live in the lanes and courtyards of the city that had a tucked away feel to them.[23] When isolated on a distribution map the Irish appear prominent - dense and clustered - in a certain few yards or lanes, which suggests a clustering mentality. It was true that certain streets customarily were mentioned when the Irish appeared in court but it would be inappropriate on the basis of negative newspapers mentions to see them as dedicated 'Irish streets', 'delinquent Irish streets', or to over-attach an 'Irish' penchant for close-by residence with compatriots as responsible for migrants selecting these streets. Irish desire for co-national familiarity was important but socio-economic position was more determining in street selection. The streets were none other than the regular central streets with yards behind at a low rent, that would have to be chosen by persons, according to their income, whether Irish or not. The Irish were not numerically

[22] The use of Lane can confuse. Some narrow streets fronted by houses such as Greyfriars Lane or Warwick Lane were so called. Palmer Lane on the other hand was a narrow passage running behind Cross Cheaping and The Burges.

[23] John Mouchet Baynham, Surgeon of the General Dispensary, and of the Town Infirmary of Birmingham, referring to Birmingham Irish in 1834 stated 'the Irish keep themselves distinct and do not mix with the English'. (Report State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain, p. 6)

dominant in any 'Irish' associated streets; in a few yards of such streets they were more physically than numerically dominant. Further the general caution of Dennis is pertinent against assuming that in an area where a group is found in a high level of concentration that it 'dominates' that area. He suggested that the group 'may still be in the minority and perceptions on the ground may not coincide with statistical assessments of reality'.[24]

In the interpretation of Irish residential settlement and movement, in so far as Irish were found in a concentric arrangement around the city core, it might be construed that there were micro-vicinities within this band, each with some local aspect desired by Irish, perhaps a prominent presence of fellow county natives, a popular landlady or a tolerant licensed premises. However it is difficult to conclude whether certain streets possessed Irish with distinctive Irish county of origin or respectability traits. There is similar difficulty in determining if the Irish identified themselves as 'belonging' to a particular street, and who might as a result be described as e.g. Much Park Street Irish, or Greyfriars Lane Irish or Well Street Irish, or New Buildings Irish. If pressed, an Irish association with shoemaking in the vicinity of Well Street or with rag dealing in Warwick Lane/Greyfriars Lane might be observed. The drawing of conclusions about the significance of Irish presence in a street, in terms of clustering, is inhibited by not knowing how restricted in a psychological sense it occupants were to the street, or if they saw themselves as belonging to a wider network of 'Irish' local streets. A verdict on degree of local clustering is impeded by the presence of radiating arterial streets on a map, which could leave the impression there were distinctive vicinities in the streets on either side of a main routeway.[25] However, the Irish who may have had their own mental map of the extent of an 'Irish area', may not have sensed that arterial routeways acted as the boundaries between separate Irish vicinities. It is also questionable if precise understanding can be conveyed by the use of the word 'cluster' since it is capable of holding wide meaning depending on areal size and intensity.[26]

It would be unwise to interpret most Irish as viewing themselves as settled long-term in particular central city vicinities of their choosing. The Hill Street analysis showed residential movement was common. Property was rented which lent to the

---

[24] Richard Dennis, *English Industrial Cities of the Nineteenth Century*, (Cambridge 1984) p. 207

[25] This perception may be accentuated by the fact that the boundary between EAs could run down the middle of arterial streets.

[26] The attachment of the proper measure of significance to the Irish in e.g. a particular street, is constrained by the type of areal unit of analysis that is employed to frame the street. In the employment of a small areal unit, a street might offer results suggesting a local cluster. Whereas with the operation of a larger areal unit that might embrace a number of streets, the contents of a specific street will register less prominently on its own and more so as part of the findings of a larger vicinity.

practice of more frequent changing of residence. The maps in Chapter 3 show the significant extent of residential dissipation between 1861 and 1881.

Irish were found in some locations, in West Orchard, behind the south side of Well Street and Palmer Lane, which were all in the vicinity of the river and were environmentally hazardous. They were also located in other thoroughfares such as St. John Street, or Greyfriars Lane which had housing stock that was considered standard for the city, albeit dilapidated and unhealthy. In the 1850s and 1860s in Caldicott's Yard, and in a few courts in Much Park Street, Well Street and New Buildings the presence of some kin-related families could be sensed as creating a physically and numerically domineering atmosphere. It may be the case that some Irish may have wished to avoid these uncouth temperamental, assertive families, where offence was easily taken, and where a perceived slight on one member was taken exception to, and regarded as a tribal insult of all. That the Irish would always tend to stay residentially close is a theme of the large volume studies, but may not be the case in towns where the Irish felt themselves not under indigenous besiegement. There were no streets persistently dominated by Irish in the manner that Caribee Island and Stafford Street in Wolverhampton, or the Inkleys and Park Street in Birmingham, bring to mind. Nor were there echoes of what O'Leary noted for Cardiff where the Irish were almost as segregated in 1871 as the black population of Philadelphia in 1860. Or in Swansea where he reported the Irish were highly segregated with their condition worsening into the 1860s.[27] Usage of the term ghetto, employing the notion of an area of sustained cultural isolation would not be appropriate in a Coventry context. There was no long-term entrenchment by a collection of specific Irish families in the streets that evidenced clustering in 1861. From the persons mapped in Greyfriars Lane in 1861 only 1 of the 28 identified in 1881 might have still resided in the lane 20 years later.[28]

The Irish were also found scattered in single families throughout the remainder of the city and no sense of a siege mentality could be detected from such a pattern. Given such a scattered pattern it would not have been even hypothetically possible for them to form part of some Irish defensive phalanx. The Irish may have been secretly welcomed. Accommodation was always rented and landlords may have gleaned income from letting out dilapidated property below the standard that natives would accept, or to find once again in demand property that was vacated by indigenous residential drift towards

[27] O'Leary, *Irish in Wales*, p. 113

[28] Maps 3.8 & 3.8A. Greyfriars Lane. It contained in 1861: 82 Irishcom/39 Irish-born, and in 1881: 28 Irishcom/16 Irish-born. Margaret Burke born in Coventry 1 year 1861. Same name mentioned as 21 years old in 1881.

Hillfields. Licensed victuallers may have quietly welcomed the increased custom that the Irish brought.

In the fractious disputes that plagued the weaving industry years, or during the Chartist age, there is almost no mention, apart from Thomas McLean, of any 'Irish' participating in or fronting proletarian action in the city.

Coventry 'prosperity' was always somewhat precarious. There is no reference to the Irish during the 1860 collapse, or that they were blamed, or scape-goated in that anxious time, as being in any way responsible through labour competition for the downturn. The collapse damaged the natural evolution of the Irish community. It must have sapped the confidence of its citizens and affected the decision by the Irish to continue residing locally. Numbers declined, with it could be argued, those skilled and energetic of their kind, most likely to vacate. In this regard an indication of the sense of a clouded future, if not impending collapse among the Irish, is shown in the exit of the family of Joseph Elston, age 57, and his wife Lucretia, both Irish-born (located in the census of 1841) and their 9 Coventry-born children, the youngest Ruth aged 2 years. They were found in Colne, Lancashire in 1861 as a family of cotton powerloom weavers.[29] Birmingham's nearness, Preston seeking to employ weavers, or advertisements in the *Herald* during the 1860s offering passage to Australia and New Zealand had appeal.[30] The industrial pick-up in the 1880s would come too late in life for many 'original' migrants to benefit from it.

Allowing for embellishment to reporting of Irish rows, and that migrant males were coming into their prime at this time, the outrageous quarrels which were reported in the early 1860s were due to intoxication but may also have been prompted by an underlying lack of money or prospects. The 1870s seems a moribund period; thereafter

---

[29] RG9/3080.33.5 ED 2. The number of families that made similar decisions is unknown. Appendix 1 refers to the Furlong and Aden households moving to Colne. Elizabeth Broughill, a 25 year old Coventry-born was also located in Colne in 1861 as a cotton powerloom weaver. RG9/3079.86.40 ED 21. Eliza was daughter of Edward and Sarah both handloom weavers from Dublin. HO/107.2067.120 ED 6. A fellow boarder similarly occupied was Ann Clark, 18 years, from Coventry. William McGowran (Appendix 2) and family moved to Derby in 1864 but returned to Coventry some years later.

[30] An example of a family moving to Birmingham is that of Coventry 1861 resident Thomas Farrell, aged 54, Coach Maker, and his 44 year old wife Elizabeth, both from Wexford with 2 Cheshire-born children, Catherine (15) and William (13). By 1871 the family had moved to Birmingham. (Thomas was there stated as born in Lancashire) RG9/2202.41.19 ED 11; RG10/3108.8.7 ED 1.
Advertisements on travel to the southern hemisphere appeared in the *Coventry Herald* 7th December 1860, 7th December 1862, 19th April 1867. The *Coventry Times* 30th April 1862 reported under the heading 'Emigration of Coventry Weavers' how Lord Leigh witnessed the departure of a second body of distressed operatives, with their wives and children, for their adopted homes in the New World. A letter published in the *Coventry Herald* 26th February 1864 written to Rev Clay told how all of the people that he sent out in the ship Golden Empire had landed safely the previous July and most of them were in work and doing comfortably. The writer mentioned 'the weather is very hot here and not like the winter in old Peeping Tom's town'. Sentiment such as this must have encouraged further emigration.

the size and essence of the community - indeed the very existence of a community comes to the fore. Its articulation found purpose not in matters of mutual well-being, but around Ireland's destiny. It is interesting that the time-period up to 1870, should contrast so markedly with the years thereafter in reportage of the Irish. The earlier type of negative reportage on the recalcitrant Irish simply faded from newspapers. Reasons have been already been given, but the most likely is their children who were locally-born blended into daily life of a changing and growing city. There was little reference to the activities of the later local Irish (except under a Catholic guise) indicating they were either not noticeable or were inactive. There was never editorial castigation of the local Irish even in the post-Famine years when 'Irish rows' commonly featured in their editions. Neither was there criticism in later years, when the perceived opportunity could have been taken, under cover of the solid reportage of nationwide efforts relating to the Irish Question.

There were very few fresh 'west of Ireland' incomers at the end of the century. Irish arrivals in this period may have included second generation Irish from elsewhere in Britain. They came as part of a wider national influx, under different more voluntary circumstances to that of mid-century immigrants, and could on arrival take up the well-paid work. Though their number would grow by 1911, in 1901 the increase as represented by Irish-born over the preceding decade had been small. The 'second' wave of Irish that settled from mid-century onwards may have found little common cause with these. Cycle workers in general who came to the city were complained of as having little attachment to the city and in times of demand could earn good wages which led to brash, 'anti-respectable' behaviour. There were too in the third set of incomers, a number of Irish-born engineers and entrepreneurs, whose stay in Coventry was motivated by opportunity and not as a response to crisis.

Irish volume was identified as key to understanding Irish response in this city. The Irish population was never large. As Mulkern noted, Coventry did not offer opportunity to unskilled Irish and they favoured settlement elsewhere.[31] The Irishcom figure which includes all those detectable with an Irish association in the peak census year of 1861 was 1,480 or 3.6%. It was not sufficiently large for the host population to feel overwhelmed and resentful. Nor was it so large that it might allow micro-clusters to swell into concentrated areas of Irish that could sustain social withdrawal from the host population, or give a sense to the Irish there was sufficient strength in numbers to make feasible any concerted large-scale opposition to the police. The torrid descriptions of

[31] Mulkern, Irish and Public Disorder in Coventry, p. 121

isolation and associated Irish misbehaviour reported for Wolverhampton, where in 1851, of its total population 3,491 or 7.0% were Irish, seemed absent from Coventry.[32] Baynham's remark in 1836 that he had a sixth part of Birmingham under his care which contained at least 2,000 Irish almost all of whom were living in poverty and filth, illustrates how small in relative terms were the number of Irish in Coventry i.e 1841: Irish-born 448/Irishcom 897.[33] Referring specifically to the Famine generation, since very few migrants arrived in the decades after the mid-century inflow, which might have counteracted depletion by death and outflow, the numbers of Irish-born present to keep the Irish cultural mores of that generation alive declined. In the absence of continued Irish-born cultural refreshment the Famine generation's descendants possessed a derived or Coventry-Irish culture as part and parcel of their upbringing, and as a result experienced a calmer rapport with the host population.

Coventry's geographical position *per se* would have entitled it to claim slightly more than the minimal number of Irish located in Warwickshire towns such as Warwick, Leamington, Stratford or Rugby. This was because of its role as a staging point on the main road between London and the north-west. Also in its closeness to Birmingham it may have gained some Irish who were originally drawn into the midlands by the regional city. Birmingham and Coventry though only seventeen miles apart were autonomous cities, each with its own civic pride and industrial energy. Coventry regarded itself as a long-established, freestanding city and did not imagine itself in the role of second fiddle to Birmingham. However in regional order, it was below Birmingham where in the 1860s Protestantism was more ebullient, provocative preaching found an excitable audience and seven Orange Order lodges were established by January 1868.[34] The contrasting level of hospitality towards the Irish between the two cities in this hierarchical relationship, calls up the findings, admittedly centred before and on 1851, of Moriarty on Huddersfield and that of Jeffes on Chester, where both towns did not experience the tensions of their respective dominant regional neighbours Bradford and Liverpool. It shows that individual towns could have their own 'ring fenced' relationship with the Irish, that benignity was more likely in smaller

[32] Swift, Irish Migrants 1815-1914, p. 109. The absence of hostility may have been the result of the Irish deciding that given their small numbers it was prudent to keep a low profile.
[33] John Mouchet Baynham, Birmingham surgeon, Report State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain, p. 6
[34] *Birmingham Daily Post* 13th January 1868. The number had risen from the two mentioned in the *Birmingham Daily Gazette* 15th July 1867.

urbanities, and was perhaps due to the larger municipalities attracting away from nearby smaller urban centres the more energetic but also the most troublesome.[35]

The study revealed that Coventry was not a complete haven of welcome and tranquillity. While it cannot be ascertained if the Coventry press restrained itself from publishing even more bigoted material than it did, what was published did not appear very restrained. The study showed week after week into the 1870s, the local press reported with a certain degree of sensational condescending relish, the anti-social behaviour of the local Irish that confirmed the national negative stereotype of the Irish as having as 'natural' a sub-standard culture.[36] When specificity demanded, a saving clause was employed that reference was intended for the 'low' Irish. Local accounts of court proceedings where the Irish were ethnically identified, depicted them as lacking personal control, as hot-tempered drunkards linked to crime and disorder and imbued with a low cunning. Coupled with this was reportage of reputation damaging Irish antics and criminal conduct in other cities and articles on the brutalised conditions in Ireland which depicted the Irish as contented idlers who were responsible for the conditions that surrounded them. Their country of origin was touted as a place from where unrest and ingratitude radiated. To complete the cocktail of disparagement, all local newspapers had an endless supply of jokes where the Irish were depicted as naïve crass buffoons. There was a sense of ridicule being compounded because these Irish did not seem to realise humour was being taken at their expense.[37] The tenor of this insidious medium of mockery which was sold under the guise of harmless amusement may not have disturbed the illiterate Irish.[38] There remains a lack of explanation in all this as to what

---

[35] There were exceptions e.g. Stockport seven miles from Manchester where an anti-Irish riot took place in 1852. (Manchester's Radical History, https://radicalmanchester.wordpress.com/2010/04/08/stockport-riot-june-1852/ Accessed 25th November 2017).

[36] The Irish must not be excused for their behaviour. In the prevailing city ambience of the time, they became their own enemy. Ziesler remarked in relation to the Dissenting and artisan city of Birmingham that the disgraceful drinking and rows did not meet with approval. (Ziesler, *Irish in Birmingham*, p. 21).

[37] Gilley, English Attitudes, p. 84. Some Irish could deprecate themselves by presenting themselves, notably in music-halls, as happy go-lucky rapscallions. Some Irish appeared amusingly obsequious though this may have been a tactic, particularly employed in law-courts or when seeking alms, to gain sympathy.

[38] Unchanged by the end of the nineteenth century was that ingrained, condescending and mocking disrespect that featured an assumed Irish stupidity and disregard for the law as shown by a 'joke' published in the *Coventry Herald* 16th May 1902 - the newspaper on balance most cordial to the Irish.

> 'The district visitor said to the proud mother Mrs Rooney in relation to her child that it is at a young age ideas are formed and characters of the young are moulded by what goes on around them. If we have good parents who try to bring us up in the proper way we escape the evil influence of bad surroundings. The visitor remarked 'Of course you are bringing him up properly, and showing him what he is to do when he grows up?' 'Av course, mim!' answered Mrs. Rooney, confidently. 'Why, it was only last night Oi hild him up to the windy to watch his fayther bate a p'licemin in the strate!'

sentient Irish thought of the way the Irish as a race were mocked. For many it must have meant a desire to play-down their origin, or to show their own respectable standing by adopting the manners of the host.

The *Standard* was most hostile to, as it saw it, the pretensions of Romanism, and showed little sympathy for Ireland's sorry plight. A cold levelling of blame for its dire pre-Famine condition could be found in its pages that charged the clergy with duping their flock.[39] Its opinions were pitched to reach over the heads of local migrants as if their sensibilities were irrelevant. The *Herald* was editorially more reflective, showing an understanding of who was responsible for the plight of the Irish.[40] As noted in Chapter 4 it wrote with courage in the tense atmosphere of the time asking what purpose was served by executing all three Irishmen in Manchester in 1867. The extent to which these city newspapers with their partisan editorial views, opinions of contributors, and reports on: local Irish behaviour, affairs in Ireland, and stand of the Catholic Church either influenced, or reflected the mind of the reader at street level may have been small.[41] Neal pointed out the uneducated section of the working class formed its judgements through direct experience of living near the Irish.[42] It strikes, from

---

Racial discrimination was so embedded, it was still in evidence a century later. (Rachel Borrill, Reporting on the publication of 'Discrimination and the Irish community in Britain', by the Commission for Racial Equality, *Irish Times* 26th June 1997.)

[39] The *Coventry Standard* 16th October 1846 printed a piece from the *Dublin Packet*: 'Repeal Capacity, - " We know your sufferings, our hearts bleed with yours;" these were the words written by Mr John O'Connell on the part of his fellow-plunderers of the Association a few days since, and coolly addresses to the famishing people of Ireland. But how was sympathy for these sufferings evinced on yesterday? By extracting from the pockets of the starving wretches upwards of £86, and this chiefly through the instrumentality of the Roman Catholic Priests. One of these pious ecclesiastics, a person named Sinnot writing from Wexford, remarks thus: - "But the approaching miseries of famine proclaim to the Government and the landed proprietors - HASTE -HASTE - HASTE;" and at the same time sends up a bank order for £25 3s 6d! Another member of the cloth…[it continued in similar vein]'. Coincidentally Placid Sinnott, born in Wexford, was a priest resident in Coventry 1847-1850 but it was not him that the article referred to as he was in Weobley 1841-1848.
(The Rex Sinnott Site, https://www.sinnottnz.com/getperson.php?personID=I2437&tree=tree5 Accessed 15th January 2019); See Appendix 8.

[40] See Appendix 8

[41] Hobbs wrote of newspapers helping to create communities, and of readers in English towns feeling connected to other readers though they had never met. (Hobbs, *A Fleet Street in Every Town*, p. 14). Coventry newspapers were a medium that conveyed municipal pride and the desirability of civic identity. Through informing readers of opinions, commercial and social activities, a communal theme was conducted of people interacting and sharing, leading fulfilling lives in the city and contributing to its good.
This rendering of city life may have belied the reality where many felt disconnected and foreign. Frank Bates, 44 years, residing in a family of six, at 51 Eagle Street, a turner and fitter in the Ordnance Works wrote on his 1911 census form in the Nationality column that he was 'English but be better off as African Blacks'. When asked if he was an 'Employer or worker' he wrote in the column 'Wage slave'. He wrote the same comments beside his two working children. When asked for the number of rooms he replied 'Four. One shilling and four and a half pence each per week & not been whitewashed or papered for about 10 years'. (RG14/18581 ED 43).
Within the relay by the media of a roseate city community any mention of Irish activity in newspapers may have been viewed contemporarily for its positive or negative contribution to the city.

[42] Neal, The Irish in Britain: integrated or assimilated? p. 12

surveying these papers, that the Non-Irish concerns over parliamentary elections, control of Lammas lands and bitter weaving disputes may have served to engage fully the populace's capacity for irritation thereby allowing the Irish to avoid becoming its venting target.

The excitable bigotry and provocation of Catholics and by inference 'ordinary' Irish, found a locus in Birmingham and not Coventry; the Irish did not cause riots in the latter, nor did they become the target of rioters that would have involved Irish disaffection and alienation. Neither were there rival Irish and English warring gangs of youths that Weinberger stated was a feature of Birmingham in the 1870s.[43] This absence of tension was not particular to Coventry. Disquiet that boiled into clashes appears to have been rare in most towns and if an Irish related disturbance broke out it could be the result of a complicated mix of factors peculiar to the town in disorder. Swift noted there was little evidence for ethnic tension or sectarian action in Wolverhampton, in contrast to the tension found in selected Lancashire or Cheshire towns.[44] The assessment of the degree of anti-Irish sentiment or Irish integration in Coventry cannot rely solely on the presence or absence of riot.[45] Hickman rightly warned that anti-Irish sentiment could exist without riots occurring or where large numbers were not present.[46] O'Leary too cautioned on construing the decline of riot as a satisfactory index of integration.[47] The middle class who disapproved of the anti-social activity of the Irish, according O'Day, would be the most unlikely to riot.[48] The well-attended concert in 1880 to raise funds for the relief of distress in Ireland indicates a measure of Coventry goodwill towards Irish people, but the strength over the decades of this kind of spirit, must have been sorely tested by the seeming thanklessness in Ireland for help as shown by the continuance of atrocities in the form of e.g. the Phoenix Parks murders in 1882.[49]

A popular view expressed in generalised studies is that the common Irish were regarded by the native workers on the lowest social tier, as even below themselves. These Irish were the butt of the disdain that could emanate from all classes who presumed to range above them.[50] It is difficult to find evidence of the 'national disdain'

---

[43] Barbara Weinberger, The Police and Public in Mid-nineteenth-century Warwickshire, in Victor Bailey (ed.), *Policing and Punishment in Nineteenth Century Britain*, (Abingdon 1981) p. 69
[44] Swift, 'Another Stafford Street Row', p. 198. There were anti-Irish riots in Stockport (1852) and anti-Catholic Murphy riots occurred in Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Ashton-under-Lyne (1867).
[45] William Murphy did not visit Coventry which meant any latent feelings were not provoked into the open.
[46] Hickman, *Religion, Class and Identity*, p. 92
[47] O'Leary, *Irish in Wales*, pp. 502-503
[48] O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour, p. 31
[49] *Dublin Weekly Nation* 1st May 1880
[50] Roberts, *The Classic Slum*, pp. 22, 23

as a force in Coventry. It may have existed just at a sufficiently low-key that it did not draw notice on itself, as would an open policy of 'No Irish need apply'. However it may have occurred as a matter of form, in refusal of job applicants, or those seeking lodgings.[51] There may have been a reluctance by some to lease property to Irish which may have contributed to Irish overcrowding and the forced tolerance by them of sub-standard dwellings.[52] The words quoted earlier of young Henry Duckham who said in July 1861 the Irish were of no account may have revealed a common, but more guarded view of the Irish. Otherwise it was only in animated situations reaching print that a deeper view might be ventilated where the Irish were directly called 'dirty' or 'Irish b--s'.[53] Lynch mentions Coventry youths in 1869 shouting abuse at convent school-girls, albeit because they were Catholics.[54] Perhaps poor Irish knew what hotels and salons did not welcome them and self-discriminated by not frequenting them.

The seeming absence of overt hostility may have been the result of the Irish deciding on a policy of passive acquiescence and given their small numbers they may have considered it prudent to play down their identity and to keep a low profile to avoid unwelcome attention.[55] There were some mid-century, troublesome Irish families that did not regard keeping a low profile as crucial. It is possible that their apparent fearlessness of the law may have caused locals to reflect on the risky consequences of their showing any open hostility to the Irish. Swift has written about Irish disorders that in Wolverhampton had an anti-police element to them. They were of a serious scale but not all-out riots. He attributed the cause of the disturbances to the military background

---

[51] Fielding remarks that usually prejudice was discreet and more likely to have occurred in small family firms. (Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 36)

[52] Nationally racial discrimination was deeply embedded, it was still in evidence a century later. (Rachel Borrill, Reporting on the publication of 'Discrimination and the Irish community in Britain', by the Commission for Racial Equality, *Irish Times* 26th June 1997.)

[53] Appendix 4: 4th July 1856, 6th August 1858, 31st October 1862

[54] Lynch, *Autobiography of a Child*; Binckes & Laing, Irish Autobiographical Fiction and Hannah Lynch, p. 123

[55] Standish Meacham, A Life Apart, The English Working Class 1890-1914, (London 1977) p. 34 (quoting Gordon Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (New York 1958) p. 143). Meacham wrote about how the working class might handle themselves by playing the game of passive acquiescence when standing alone against middle-class representatives. Passive acquiescence was a method by which those in a threatened minority group could survive 'by agreeing with his adversary he escapes being conspicuous…and quietly leads his life in two compartments: one (more active) among his own kind, one (more passive) in the outer world'.
The Irish playing down their identity was noted by Mary J. Hickman and Walter Bronwen, *Discrimination and the Irish Community in Britain: A Report of Research Undertaken for the Commission for Racial Equality*, (London 1997) p. 229. They found this was the reaction of 20th century migrants when exposed to anti-Irish hostility. They wrote 'A significant minority especially amongst women, said they had played down their Irish identity at times, especially by altering their accent or keeping quiet'. It is difficult to ascertain if these strategies were employed by the Irish in Coventry. In interpreting the degree of assimilation, allowance must be made for their possible use, and heed taken of Hickman's advice that the maintenance of such a stance is not evidence of assimilation 'but of a specific response by Irish people to the various anti-Irish and anti-Catholic discourses and practices'. (Hickman, Alternative historiographies, p. 253).

of successive Chief Constables keen to assert police authority, and who with the blessing of the Magistracy and Town Council, did so by deliberately clamping down on petty crime. This cut across the habits of the Irish who resented the police evicting them from public houses at closing time, arresting them for public drunkenness and for regulating numbers in lodging houses.[56] This sort of clamp down was in evidence in Coventry but without similar police heavy-handedness or collective Irish resentment of the police that was expressed in violence.[57] McLean told how he was arrogantly treated by a policeman in 1860, though not because he was Irish (Appendix 2). Examples of draconian, or conscious overly forceful treatment of the Irish have not been noted. Most likely the Irish were wary of the police, as part of what Weinberger noted was the general unpopularity of the police among the working class. But also because they may have suspected the police had hidden anti-Irish sentiment which could bare its teeth if specific conditions of unease gave opportunity, as had happened in Birmingham where their partisan attitude saw light in 1867.[58]

The police rightly challenged individuals drunk and disorderly in the streets but were not otherwise proactive against the Irish; they only appeared to come into conflict with more clustered Irish when they were forced to intervene in Irish rows. Perhaps they had some reluctance in getting too involved as reports showed in doing so the Irish could well assault them, or have attempts made by Irish friends to forcibly rescue the arrested person, or could be intimidated by a surrounding crowd who might turn from being onlookers to participants in a moment.[59]

Anti-social behaviour when referred to in this study has featured usually in relation to a street, and may seem sporadic, but if viewed in a city-wide perspective, two patterns could be noted. These might be classified by 'type' i.e. the 'Irish row' (Appendix 4), or by 'family', since it was caused over time by scattered members of the then known as aberrant families such as the Gahagans or Grogans. In each of these families the presence of a number of young adult brothers that could defend themselves, may have supplied a fearless attitude to neighbours and the law. The deviancy in some

[56] Swift, 'Another Stafford Street Row', pp. 184-185

[57] John Norris who was born in Wells, Somerset became chief constable of Coventry in 1862 and remained so until 1890. An interesting note is that the year before he took up his position, he was recorded in Walcot (Bath), Somerset as sharing the same house as Dorathea Tollenham, aged 60, Fundholder, born in Dublin. RG9/1691.79.23 ED 10

[58] Weinberger, Police and Public, pp. 69, 75. She noted the police were disliked because they were strangers who intruded unnecessarily into working-class neighbourhoods where they had no other business except surveillance. She outlined police behaviour which showed bias against the pastimes and practices of the poor and so were resented by the working class.

[59] A policeman's lot was not the easiest. The most cursory perusal of the Coventry Police Force Annual Reports for mid-century reveals a high turnover of police. (Coventry Police Force Annual Reports 1836-1900, Ref: CCPO, Coventry History Centre, Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Jordan Well, Coventry).

of these families was seen to continue into the second generation. Their lack of social etiquette could be described in modern parlance as 'shameless' with them having no concept of responsibility to act as ambassadors promoting the Irish as an honourable people. This turning of their backs on society seems to have its origin in an outlaw disposition that was unused to having its actions interpreted as breaking the law, or was unwilling to have it actions circumscribed by law, especially if the law was regarded as made by 'alien' authority. The lack of social conscience expressed in their behaviour might also be explained by referring to the frustration of their circumstances, a lack of a sense of belonging to wider society, quarrelling, faction fighting and family feuding as aspects of culture, and the troubled adjustment of young unschooled migrants untethered from familiar surroundings.

The disquieting behaviour provided confirmation for those who sought it that the Irish might be referred to as 'low' and that such conduct was intrinsic to Irish cultural tradition.[60] Fitzpatrick asserted the British belief that anti-social behaviour was an innate Irish trait which 'left its imprint on immigrant imagination, causing many settlers to revel in misconduct that might otherwise have been a matter of shame'.[61] Much disorder was rooted in an Irish fondness for alcohol consumption. According to Swift drinking was 'a key element of leisure culture in Ireland'.[62] Alcohol was an accelerant of mayhem by inducing anger and bravado. In all this the Coventry magistracy appeared firm but remarkably fair and forbearant to the Irish. Transgressions, even vicious fights or assaults on constables, were usually leniently dealt with by the imposition of a fine or binding to the peace, but custodial sentences were meted out e.g. if there was persistent domestic abuse.[63]

Apart from Gavazzi's visit in 1854, there were no anti-Catholic visiting preachers that might stir up trouble, or hinder the Catholic Church's journey towards respectability, or suck the Irish into conflict as occurred in Birmingham.[64] Even if they had sojourned, the metaphor used for elsewhere 'of simmering resentment that preaching could bring to the boil' did not apply to an amiable Coventry. The compact form of the city might have brought about, as Herson suggested occurred in Stafford,

---

[60] Swift noted that Irish peasant society was widely perceived as brutalized. (Swift, Behaving Badly? p. 113).
[61] Fitzpatrick, A peculiar tramping people, p. 651
[62] Swift, Behaving Badly? p. 110
[63] See Appendix 4: *Coventry Herald* 22nd September 1876
[64] The remarks made by Rev. J. Drury, London Clerical Secretary of the Protestant Reformation Society, who spoke at a Coventry City Mission meeting in St Mary's Hall in November 1857 were mentioned in Chapter 1 and referred to in Appendix 5.

proximity of classes that assisted social control and facilitated integration.[65] There was no febrile atmosphere in the city that might have developed if separate Catholic and Protestant Irish quarters containing those with opposing versions of identity existed. This arrangement could be found in more northerly towns e.g. Greenock, where it was a source of sectarian and nationalist tension.[66]

There was an apparent easing in the late century of prejudice as reflected by less reference in Coventry newspapers to the Irish in terms of e.g. their supposed contentment with 'pigs in the parlour' conditions, although this abatement may not have occurred at street level. Reduced newspaper attention that specifically identified the Irish in a negative light may have been due to what Ziesler, writing on Birmingham, identified as occurring there. She noted the later century Irish were less newsworthy, due to their having smaller numerical significance and their increasing conformance to accepted behaviour patterns.[67] The Irish of later generations if born in Coventry were less identifiable as Irish. The alcohol fuelled fighting and animus of the 1860s that tainted the reputation of earlier Irish settlement had remarkably now vanished and thus was no longer an issue that drew attention to the Irish. Generally circumstances improved for the Coventry Irish and would have been in line with Swift's remark that the Wulfrunian Irish by the 1870s appeared 'less alienated, more integrated, and increasingly tolerated in local society than they had been earlier in the nineteenth century'.[68]

Irish nationalism and the Catholic Church and were seen by a number of writers as the cornerstone of the Irish community, according to Hickman.[69] However the study showed the use of 'cornerstone' requires qualification. While 'justice for Ireland' was a topic that was of common interest to many Irish, the expression of local nationalism through active collective gesture, found purchase first only in the 1880s through the meetings of Land League, later National League in Coventry. While the Branch's concern for Ireland raised consciousness among local Irish of their identity, its effective role was essentially a vote mobilizer at the service of the Liberals. The Branch seemed conflicted by its strongly couched opinion that England was to blame for Ireland's grievances, and its desire to maintain local popular goodwill which the airing of such sentiment might impede. Holding some of its meetings in public houses may have lessened the local League's wider appeal. The unlikelihood of early advance in the

[65] Herson, Migration, 'community' or integretation? p. 168
[66] Lobban, Irish in Greenock, pp. 270-281
[67] Ziesler, *Irish in Birmingham*, p. 133
[68] Swift, 'Another Stafford Street Row', p. 199
[69] Hickman, Alternative historiographies, p. 243

provision of Home Rule due to the defeat of Bills in 1886 and 1893, along with its hectoring view that local Irish people owed it to their ancestors to have a 'sense of duty to Ireland' may also have lessened its allure.

The study outlined how the Coventry Catholic Church in its local governance and outlook, remained an 'English' Church: It made no public gesture of recognition to the Irish in its congregation, and was silent on the merits of nationalist aspiration; Ullathorne was resolute in his inimical opposition to Fenianism.[70] The latter part of Gilley's remark that the enormous task of ministering to the stressed Irish on their arrival was a distraction from the Church establishment's mission to convert England, and that the Irish were little credited as Irish and seen as the poor, may be valid in Coventry. The findings on Coventry Catholic Irish concur with Herson's observation on their counterparts in Stafford that the Irish had to find respectability within the larger Catholic community rather than in 'a representation of Irishness' to the native population.[71]

Gilley suggested that the attitude of many English lay-Catholics towards the Catholic Irish, mirrored that of the English population without the anti-Catholicism and was a mixture of hostility and indifference. This suggestion could not be verified in relation to Coventry, beyond noting that the CYMS membership in the years of foundation appeared a harmonious mixture of English and Irish-born.[72]

The study found from evidence in McDonnell's letter of July 1885 that assertive local nationalism was kept at arm's length by the local church in the 1880s which only sanctioned gatherings in the Catholic schoolroom with a genteel, romantic, nostalgic remembrance of Ireland, or the 'Auld country'.[73] Even in constitutional political activity, with Catholic stalwart McVeagh in an anti-Gladstone standpoint (not to mind similarly disposed English Catholics such as Petre) any espousal of a candidature promoting domestic government in Ireland, which would be a promotion popular with

---

[70] The non-appearance of any acknowledgement of specific 'Irish' involvement in Church affairs particularly in the 1860s and 1870s, if indeed such participation occurred, may not have been deliberate on the part of the Church. It may relate to what sources are available and what they relate. They focus, as might be expected, on parochial activity in a Warwickshire mission, at a remove from Irish affairs e.g. building St. Mary's convent and school, ministering to the workhouse, relations with the Mercy Convent, and summer outings of parishioners to country estates. The establishment of the CYMS in 1858 shows there was no discrimination by the local priest against the Irish-born since he selected Irish-borns as its president and vice-president.

[71] Herson, *Divergent paths*, p. 281

[72] Gilley, English Catholic Attitudes, p. 109. Appendix 20 in referring to a letter written in 1906 shows that Catholics could then see themselves as Irish Catholics or English Catholics.

[73] There was a mildness to proceedings based on a wish not to offend non-Catholic locals who were always thanked for turning up. The money from the admission tickets they bought was important source of revenue. At the turn of the century 'God save Ireland' was sung at the close of a number of meetings in the schoolroom.

the majority of Irish, was likely to be eschewed by the clergy. In making available the schoolroom as a venue for popular celebrations of Irish culture and heritage it maintained a level of control over local manifestation of Irish identity.

The local Church made for a distinction between the lives of Irish Catholic people and the lives of those who were English, through separate schooling and insistence on same-faith marriage. Through their education scheme they minimised the ethnic background of migrant children by instilling British values, and may have regarded this as wholly normal and beneficial to migrant children born in the city. In this process the Church was acting according to Bossy as an 'agent of assimilation'.[74] But in that process also was at play the paradox remarked on by Gilley.[75] In minimising the ethnic background through Catholic schooling the Church's insistence on sectarian schooling, given Gilley's remark that the 'form of the Irish community was simply the Church' upheld the view the Irish had an especial identity.[76] It was only according to its own particular terms prepared to assist in bonding the Irish on an ethnic basis, i.e. if the Irish were Catholic and enjoyed an appreciation of refined Irish culture. Its acceptance of the Irish simply as Cathlolics must nevertheless have helped the Irish to feel part of the wider organisation of society. Its presence in offering solace, hope and purpose to Coventry migrants is to be recognised. Casey suggested the possibility that 'the community which publicly engages in religious practice generates positivity in the face of the travails of life'.[77] Its tenets of moral rectitude, upheld by fear of damnation, together with its conservative religious message of respect for authority, stoic acceptance and humility, must have aided conformity, aquiescence and integration (Figure 4.8). It would surely have encouraged temperance, thrift and care of dependents to the advantage of its Irish adherents. Nevertheless its promotion of earthly existence as temporal -'in a vale of tears' which was a mere prelude to that in an afterlife, and its disapproval of materialism may have lessened the purpose of wordly self-advancement among the Irish.

Belchem refers to the existence in Liverpool of a culture of poverty based on the sanctity of the 'Catholic virtue of Holy Poverty' which there marked out the truly Irish.[78] Such self-debasement if it existed in Coventry would have lowered the self-esteem of the Irish. Evidence of the Irish in Coventry accepting, or being encouraged to

---

[74] Bossy, *English Catholic Community*, p. 309
[75] Gilley, English Catholic Attitudes, p. 103
[76] Ibid., p. 103
[77] Patricia Casey, Professor of Psychiatry, University College Dublin. (*Irish Independent* 9th February 2019).
[78] Belchem, *Irish, Catholic and Scouse*, p. 72

accept, their social standing through taking virtuous satisfaction in the ennobled state of poverty could not be found.[79]

The Church - both the institution and its doctrine - was actively disliked by much of British society, which was to the general disadvantage of its Irish adherents. In Coventry this study discerned antagonism towards Catholicism, in what was published by the *Standard* and by what was blazoned by Dissenting clerics, but it was levelled directly at the Church as a body and rarely at the local mission or the local Irish.[80] This was in the open and directed at the Church's presumptions as an organization - its loyalty to the Crown and hold over its members - and to its theological interpretation. Catholics as individuals faced discriminatory practice when seeking employment, which rankled the clergy. Sullivan in 1875 referred to its occurrence while over a half century later Abbot Bamford felt compelled to introduce it in his address to civic dignitaries.[81] Later century local criticism of the Church was not as intense especially after the death of Delf in 1882.[82] In its final quarter Catholics benefited from the growth of what Evans states might loosely be called secularism.[83] Norman explained the lessening of anti-Catholicism at the end of the nineteenth century as due to the general decline in religious sentiment among the public rather than any especial tolerant approach towards Catholics.[84]

---

[79] Barclay revealed that his mother in Leicester took solace in her poverty. 'Poverty was accepted by mother with the patience of Job. 'Why shouldn't we suffer when Our Blessed Lord Himself suffered? Didn't He say blessed are the poor…' [79] (Barclay, *Memoirs and Medleys*, p. 24).

[80] The *Standard* always made space for letters and sermons of critics expounding on questions of Catholic teaching. For example John Cumming, a London based virulent anti-Catholic lecturer (who did not frequent Coventry) visited Northampton in February 1865. His provocative sermons given there were published in full by the *Standard*. See Appendix 5 for detail on Dr Cumming. Fielding remarked that doctrinal or theological religious questions only enthused the middle class and not the population as a whole. (*Coventry Standard* 10th, 18th & 24th February 1865; Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 35).

[81] Canon O Sullivan at the opening of the new St. Osburg's schools quoted the case of a young man who was refused an apprenticeship in the drapery business in Birmingham because he was Catholic. (*Coventry Standard* 8th October 1875). In 1928 a civic visit was made by all city dignitaries - councillors, aldermen, justices and senior officials - to St. Osburg's Church to attend High Mass. Heading the procession was A.J. Makepeace the newly elected Mayor of the city who was the first Roman Catholic Mayor since the Reformation. Abbot Bamford said the Catholics of Coventry felt honoured in the conferral of Mayoralty on Makepeace. He said Catholics knew from experience that very often their religion was a bar to promotion and that often times a person who was suited for a certain post was set aside simply because he was a Catholic. (*Midland Daily Telegraph* 19th November 1928). It might be noted that Sullivan had come from Birmingham and Bamford from Blyth Northumberland on both celebratoryoccasions and they may have been providing an imported view that was not reflected in Coventry. Bamford was aggrieved that being Catholic was a bar to promotion but being in a job position that offered the kind of promotion implied by Bamford may not have arisen for many Irish.

[82] In an address in St. Osburgh's, Rev. Pius Cavanagh was reported to have admitted to the congregation 'that of late years there had been a great change both in the press and in the pulpit, and that from the latter we seldom heard now the fierce denunciations of Catholics which were common in bygone days'. (*Coventry Evening Telegraph* 7th September 1891)

[83] Evans, *The Victorian Age*, pp. 277, 279, 280

[84] He did qualify his remark by noting anti-Catholicism was fading in educated minds but was still strong among the working class. (Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England*, p. 20).

Herson noted that Catholicism had transformed from a community of dissent to a secure and disciplined Church. In Coventry through the ameliorating manner of Pratt, the innocent detachment of Moore and exactitude and probity of Pereira, the local clergy embedded itself in the social and mental fabric of the city as a force for rectitude and stability. Delf's pointed questioning of Catholic right to have a seat on the School Board in the 1870s, and in doing so raising smearing, hoary canards about Catholics surrendering their mental and moral freedom and their loyalty to the Queen, was particularly irritating to the Catholic Clergy as they sought to present the Catholic relationship with the city as in a normalised state.[85] Over time there was ingratiation, its effect seen in the visible gestures of engagement by the local Catholic Church on occasions of civic celebration and of reported respectful loyal toasts submitted by clergy when dignitaries attended Catholic related social functions.[86] This civic participation, assisted by its local side-stepping of potential tension by a discrete absence at election meetings, and non-involvement in nationalistic or radical concerns, must have contributed towards a more beneficent public view of its adherents, which included the Irish.[87]

---

[85] At the time of Delf's opposition in 1876 a letter in the *Herald* 8th December, written by 'A Protestant of Protestants' stated in part: 'Let Father Moore take note that there is a constantly increasing number... who think the teaching of priestcraft not only useless, but also, as judged by the history of his infallible church, mischievous: and though he and others of his kind may think themselves quite safe in that coward's castle, the pulpit, the time will come when they will have to meet their opponents face to face on a free platform, or be publicly branded as braggarts who used persecution to put down the free expression of thought as long as they were able to do so, but now lack courage to show the truth of their much-vaunted faith by fair and open discussion.'

[86] The *Coventry Herald* 18th November 1881 saw Fr Moore in attendance along with a large collection of dignitaries for the Annual Meeting of the governors and friends of the Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital. The *Coventry Herald* 2nd November 1883 reported that a civic banquet was given at the Queens Hotel, by the Magistrates, Corporation and citizens to honour the Mayor A.S. Tomson. The civic, legal and medical elite enjoyed a sumptuous dinner to the strains of an orchestral band, after which toasts were loyally drunk and the National Athem sung. Father Moore was present and was one of the respondees. He said, after which he received applause: 'Speaking in the name of the Catholics of Coventry, he might say that his worship had been most liberal to them…he felt bound to say they owed Mr Tomson a deep debt of gratitude for what he had done for them. He (the speaker) had been twenty-four years in Coventry, and he felt great interest in the old place…' The *Coventry Herald* 6th June 1908 stated that at the CYMS dinner celebrating the 50th year since its foundation Fr Finch toasted 'The Pope and the King'. Three years later on 20th April the *Telegraph* recorded a similar toast.

[87] An example of the Church's willingness to be a participant in the preservation of social order, and the co-incidence of it values with those of established society, in whose interest it was, that a policy of obedience was promoted, as a method to maintain the arrangement of society, is shown by the *Telegraph* 18th January 1909. It reported St. Osburg's was filled to overflowing by a congregation present to witness the blessing of the colours of the recently formed Catholic Boys' Brigade then 123 strong. The Earl of Denbigh who presented the colours picked up the point about the need for obedience made by Fr O'Reilly earlier. Denbigh in commending the role of the Boy's Brigade which fostered 'habits of discipline and accustomed them to obey the words of authority', said in part, 'habitual disobedience was taught nowadays by some organisations that were not ashamed to go around and poison the minds of our youth and do everything they could to incite them against every form of authority. In these days it could not be too earnestly remembered that society as a rule could not possibly get on unless they obeyed those who were in authority over them. They all had to obey orders, whether it was the man in blue or the Judge in the High Court, their parents, their superiors in business, or their superiors and advisers in the Church. If

Herson pointed to migrant entry and exit figures for a city, leaving an impression of transience and instability that did not do justice to the existence of a significant body of settled stable families.[88] *Irish households* containing a growing local-born second-generation, were revealed to anchor Irish presence in Coventry, onwards from the first census in 1841 to specify the Irish. Intermarriage was shown to be common, with Table 5.2 disclosing e.g. in 1871 that in two-thirds of 191 *Irish Household* marriages, one spouse was Non-Irish-born. This finding aligns with that of Herson who noted more than one-third of Stafford's Catholic marriages were of Irish marrying locals.[89] Table 5.7 showed even from 1841 the overwhelming weight of 'Irish' children were born and reared in a Coventrian ambience which must have diluted Irish cultural distinctness from an early age.

Lees noted about Irish households in London that they were larger than British households due to a greater Irish acceptance of lodgers, though the family within it was the same size as for working class British families.[90] This study has shown that there was little unduly different in family size, or household size, between the Irish and Coventrians households in 1851. With appropriate allowance for the older age-bias of Irish-born populations later in the century, and the quantums being compared, convergence with city demographic norms can be seen in the Tables of Chapter 6. City alignment is attested to once more in the employment and residential findings for 1911 in Appendix 20.

Similar to Lees finding, there was relative to 'Coventry Households' an increased number of lodgers in *Irish Households*. The heightened lodging phenomenon was due to the post-Famine exigency. As Lees suggested for London, in Coventry, lodging (if not the overcrowding) was a stabilising influence on the Irish community. As a practice it satisfied those who accepted lodgers, who were provided with a useful source of income and those seeking lodgings who were provided with shelter and local grounding. It was visible in 1851, predominantly among unattached young adults, but excessive lodger numbers per household was strongly curtailed thereafter by inspection, and for a number of subsequent decades by the fall-off in new arrivals. Even at the pinnacle of settlement in 1861, of 319 *Irish Households*, over 80.0% did not share with kin or with lodgers. The Irish were also noted lodging in *English households containing Irish* which must have aided acceptance. By 1881 as Table 6.5 indicated the lodging profile of the

---

they did not pay attention to orders they could not possibly prosper, and society could not possibly continue to exist.'

[88] Herson, Migration, 'community' or integretation? p. 162

[89] Herson, A small-town perspective, p. 96

[90] Lees, Irish slum Communities in London, p. 382

Irish ranged widely in age and marital status in these households, and showed analysis of lodgings is best served when not undertaken separate from the context in which it occurred. Dwelling behaviour in Coventry was not divided between those in a transient process undertaken by lodgers, and those in a stable settled process engaged in by households. Persons labelled as in one category in a census might be labelled as in another later. Lodging while purveying an essence of transience and dependence was in fact a term that in practice in Coventry also embraced sophisticated boarders.

Table display has been as open to cater for the findings on women as much as for men. However married women fell in enumeration pages under the headship of their husbands where they largely appeared as unoccupied dependents. Without it being recorded they may have assisted their partners where work such as weaving was undertaken at home. Their actual role in rearing and making a home for their children lent stability to migrant families. They were as O'Leary noted the 'culture carriers' to the subsequent generation.[91] They do not feature in reports in a Coventry society where male exploits dominated. It is suggested that many of these anonymous women over three generations were resilient during their fraught lives, caused by poverty, multiple pregnancies, labour and risks in childbirth, alcohol-abusing husbands, and the likely endurance of years of widowhood.

As perceived in the present study, the Irish did not manifest to any degree, a collective sense of self until the 1880s. There was no appeal for clemency before, or sympathy expressed after, the State's wrathful retribution in 1867 in executing the 'Manchester Martyrs'. The behaviour of the State seemed, more so in nearby Birmingham than in Coventry, to viscerally affect the Irish.[92] However if there was sympathy for the plight of the condemned, it may simply have remained unspoken in the face of the wall of denunciation from newspapers and Ullathorne. The thickness of the tolerant Coventry crust was unknown; the Irish had been had violently accosted in 1867 in nearby Birmingham and a smaller grouping of Irish in Coventry was even more vulnerable.[93] Common purpose was to occur in the 1880s under the aegis of advocacy

---

[91] O'Leary, *Irish in Wales*, p. 300

[92] Davis writes of the moving experience of 5,000 Irish walking in procession to the grounds of Nechells church where on the steps of the church, which had its doors locked, the Irish without any priest present said prayers for the condemned men in Manchester.

[93] The sense that innocent Irish people residing in Coventry felt at risk of revenge attacks following the Coventry IRA bomb outrage in August 1939 could be gleaned from the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 28th August 1939, where widespread feeling of anger against Irishmen was recorded. That innocent persons apparently on friendly terms with locals could quickly become the target of anger, simply because they shared the same birthplace as enemies of Britain is seen in Walters' recount of the frightening treatment that Rudolph Henninger, a German resident who kept a shop in Lower Stoke, Coventry, and his family experienced at the hands of a mob during the Great War. (Walters, *Story of Coventry*, pp. 205, 206).

for self-rule, alleviation of distress, and protest over coercive security that affected the island of Ireland.

Having a common native land was a detail that would have facilitated migrants becoming mutually acquainted. However sharing same-place origin was not sufficient to fuse migrants into a close interacting group. As Herson noted for Stafford, there was no monolithic community in a strongly cohesive mode advocating ethnic core values or addressing concerns pertaining to its day-to-day existence in Coventry. In those terms there was not a community and ergo not one that was sustainable. At most, the study showed different combinations of Irish people, could come together with different frequency, purpose and enthusiasm, to share in perhaps a number of different ethoses that had different levels of Irish connection. Many would worship in company weekly; 'young' men would gather in a spirit of Catholic fellowship perhaps monthly; some would enjoy attending an occasional St. Osburg's schoolroom presentation listening to Irish story and song. There is a subliminal desire for migrants to associate with each other when in the midst of an 'alien' culture. These people may have found sufficient contentment gathering together under a Catholic identity rather than an Irish one.[94]

Others would meet half-yearly in a public-house to advance the Irish cause under the auspices of the Land League. Many enjoyed the opportunity to gather annually for entertainment and in celebration of Irish roots on St. Patrick's Day. It was an occasion on which it was 'licensed' to display, through symbols and merriment, an Irish ethnicity. However it was just an annual assemblage and otherwise those persons did not appear to gather in any such volume as Irish, in order to activate any mutual vision of what might be collectively important to them. These festive participants may have included those Irish who came to Coventry in the final decades seeking employment in the cycle trade; some of these may have had a footloose commitment to the city. If the celebration was held in the Catholic schoolroom the 'Catholic' and 'Irish' reasons for gathering may have been ambiguous.

Constitutional activity provided another setting in which the Irish could coalesce but the 'Coventry Irish' as spoken of in that connection was a political conceit that was premised on bonding around an issue to secure parliamentary advantage and was largely tactical and periodic in nature. Also Hennessey and McGowran were public house licensees, who may have had a clientele that met regularly to engage in Irish raillery. Irish people would also share in consanguineous and affinitive relationships where they might supportively attend in sympathy at funerals, and for revelry after marriage

[94] Herson, *Divergent paths*, p. 281

ceremonies. Attendance could range over a number of these comprisals of community which were not mutually exclusive, but were shaped around those who were active, and in the dominant cultural and religious grouping i.e. Celtic Catholic. In this sense 'community' was the physical expression of Irish identity.

This type of active expression may not have been undertaken by all; a lapsed Catholic, or one too decrepit to attend church, or who did not drink alcohol or deemed themselves too old to engage in gaiety, may not have engaged in any communal activity.[95] Some in order to gain peer acceptance may not have adverted to their Irish heritage, which had historical negativity, and believed keeping a low profile and mirroring the idioms of city natives was the way to ensure acceptance.[96] For some of migrant stock, due to time's passage and host cultural dominance, Irishness had lost its significance. It may be this that P. McDonnell identified, as lethargy among the local Irish, that worked against the patriotic expression he desired in his letter, referred to in Chapter 4. Iteration of Irish identity seemed particularly bound up in a nationalistic desire for self-rule, or retaining a lasting, bitter feeling of being victimised. Some Irish may have not wished to be associated with an assertive iteration of being Irish that emphasised difference with locals.

Again identity might be on show, even if indirectly, during these gatherings frequented by the Irish, but was unlikely to be flaunted in the workplace. The above activities all had a private ring to them in Coventry, there being no public parades or demonstrations of the Irish consciously gathered to show distinct ethnicity. The useful Coventry list of subscribers to the Parnell Testimonial Fund in late 1883, with allowance made for those too polite to decline the request for a contribution, shows there was a collection of Irish who were known to each other on an ethnic basis, and probably shows the extent of the Irish circle who felt themselves to be the Irish of Coventry. It would be too ambitious to conclude on the basis of a mere subscription, that those listed comprised the cohesive community extant in the 1880s.[97] The publication of the list in a Dublin printed paper, and not locally, might suggest unease

---

[95] It was likely those over 60 years of age gathered together only by reason of their Catholic Church membership. In December 1906 and August 1907 the Brotherhood of St Vincent de Paul treated Catholics of that age group including those in the Workhouse to music and food in St. Osburg's schoolroom. At the latter meeting there were ninety present including it was stated James Callaghan (93 years) and Michael Monaghan (91 years) (Table A.19.1) both from the Workhouse. Their births in Ireland were not mentioned in the report. (*Coventry Herald* 29th December 1906; *Coventry Telegraph* 17th August 1907).

[96] O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour, p. 93. He remarked when the Irish conformed to English values they were quietly accepted in England; Roberts, *The Classic Slum*, p. 110

[97] The prime contributor simply could not be identified, while the names of Dr McVeagh, Dr Fenton and William McGowran are noticeably absent.

for those on the list of subscribers becoming locally perceived as part of an Irish grouping. In the search for tangible visible groupings, a network of trusted Irish/Catholic private friendships may be overlooked. The study provided examples of how the Irish could act as executors of wills for each other. In an outlining of 'the Irish' it must be realised that the meaning of ethnic belonging may have changed over time, and what the sense of being Irish meant to one generation may not have been the same to those who had never set foot on the island of Ireland and had grown up in a British milieu. Fitzpatrick observed 'sidestepping of the complexities and ambiguities of emigrant 'Irishness' is to exaggerate the cohesiveness of a supposed community'.[98]

The fixity suggested by the term 'community' implies a comfortable commitment to the city by an Irish endeared to its character. The study showed that despite appearances connectivity could be weak. P. O'Donnell who conspicuously represented the Coventry Irish in the 1880s returned to Ireland. For every example of a professional, or assistant priest who lingered in the city, another example could be furnished of someone who left. Indeed the illustrious Denis McVeagh after a lifetime of high medical and civic commitment left the city when he retired (See Appendix 2 for the controversy that may have prompted his departure).

The previous chapter in introducing the Doran family showed how specific individual experiences might be, and thus how sweeping observations about e.g. 'poverty struck Irish' risk misconstruing substantive realities. Due to its compelling, tragic nature and the large numbers involved, recounting the collective experience of poor Famine-era Catholic migrants has become the standard portrayal in migrant narration.[99] It is a practice - easily lapsed into even by circumspect writers - where Irish outside that particular characterization may be neglected. This study has shown the heterogenous extent of the Irish; all were not of one mind, as Irish Catholic McVeagh's support for Unionism showed.[100] Protestant Irish are not distinguishable as such in the census and cannot be systematically followed. The absence of exposition appears conveniently excused by writers, on the basis that pursuance in any case is unnecessary, since they could so quickly blend into the host society. Information on working-class Irish Protestants is not available for Coventry, with the helpful exception of McLean,

---

[98] David Fitzpatrick, Review: The Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire by W. J. Lowe, *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 109, No. 430 (Feb. 1994) p. 221

[99] Belchem, *Irish, Catholic and Scouse*, p. 45. He referred to historians 'with their fixation on the 'poor Irish''.

[100] McVeagh attended a Unionist demonstration in the Corn Exchange in 1892. There is no mention of his political affiliation before then. He may have been a consistent Unionist rather than having become a Liberal Unionist in recent years. (*Midland Daily Telegraph* 25th June 1892).

but the situation of some of those of middle-class and higher rank outside the Catholic Celtic milieu that has emerged in this study has been explored. Similar to what Ziesler concluded occurred in relation to Birmingham, the Coventry Irish Protestants adopted rapidly the allegiances and attitudes of the English middle-class, they did not convene as Irish Protestants (though may have met socially), or feel responsible for the majority of the Irish in poverty.[101] However as noted there appeared to be a transient 'incidental' quality to their Coventry residence and their inclusion in statistics may actually distort discernment of the size of community conceived around the notion of more long-term settled stay in the city.[102]

The large number of Dublin-born in Coventry threaded across the decades did not go unnoticed. These citified folk may have found adjustment to the Coventry urban ambience less traumatic. The study highlighted migrants in Coventry whose identity appeared mutated by time, Irish-born who never identified as Irish, or professional or retailing Irish of such social standing they could straddle with ease both indigenous and Irish cultures. These possessed identities based on having 'English' military inheritance, or having ease of religious or social accommodation with the host country. The examples provided, showed that of itself, being Irish-born did not seem an issue in Coventry, if social standing or disposition were deemed correct. Because Coventry was a small pool, some of these refined Irish-born had greater opportunity to achieve city-wide recognition and to be perceived as prominent and influential in a way that might not be attained if they were to operate in a larger city.[103] Their presence (not all were Protestant), in sharing the same norms of the host population, signalled integration as the route to success, but was also influential in bolstering the dignity of all Irish.[104] It showed to locals in a compact city that being Irish-born did not necessarily mean a lack of intelligence, loyalty, drive, or commitment to the social values and well-being of Coventry. However while ambassadors of Irish good character it is unlikely they would

---

[101] Ziesler, *Irish in Birmingham*, pp. 123-125. St. Lawrance Burke, prioritised English cultural norms. However he displayed those aspects of the Irish character that the English consider to be charming facets of Irish personality. It was said that he was 'Cheery, witty and like many Irishmen, naturally witty'. See Appendix 2.

[102] Chapter 5 referred to the 12 lodging surveyors. A suitable family example of this transient 'incidental' involvement is provided by William A Gardiner (1837-1924). He was born in Dewsbury. In 1891 he resided at 5 Queens Road, Coventry with Irish-born (Kingstown) wife Katherine. He was a physician & surgeon to the army. In 1901 he was recorded as a retired colonel living in Ipswich St. Margaret, Suffolk and in 1911 he resided in Cheltenham. RG12/2451.76.3 ED 33

[103] Their interesting pathways to Coventry are related in Appendix 2.

[104] The *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 22nd March 1905 described a lecture given by Dr Richardson Rice upon "Irish Wit and Humour" to a large attendance in St. Paul's Schools. Dr Rice remarked that the characteristics of the Irish were that of a light-hearted and humorous race, never seeming to take anything seriously, and they could quickly adapt themselves to the various situations they were in. This employment of Irish wit was a flourish used by Dr St. Lawrance Burke (Appendix 2). Irish-born medical doctors in Coventry left few in doubt how learned Irish people could be.

have mixed socially with the Irish in other classes. Pooley's observation is pertinent to Coventry that the bonds between inner city families of any cultural background experiencing poor housing must have been 'closer than the links between poor Irish migrants and successful middle-class Irish families living in the suburbs'.[105]

The study emphasised that the attributes of professional people should not be glossed over because of their fewness. Nor should their import be unwitnessed by any insistence on conciseness that restricts tabulation to displaying the traits of the numerically dominant swathes of the Irish population. An auctioneer or doctor could have social impact beyond the peculiarity of their skills (which in themselves involved networking and trust). If not all possessed an Irish kindred spirit, or behaved self-consciously as Irish, or were on the same side of the wide social divide as the majority of Irish, they were still marked lifelong as Irish by birth. They brought prestige to the fact of having Ireland as birthplace, and they gave an infusion of class respectability into the Irish quantum.

Consideration has been given to the continued existence of distinctive Irish presence in the city. Aware of O'Day's reference to the neglect of the phenomenon of integration in analytical literature, where there is more attention on those who kept their ethnicity than on those who relinquished it, some deliberation follows on the degree of Irish integration at the turn of the century.[106] According to Panayi integration remains a slow process. He observed: 'Over time and through generations, convergence with the norms of the population as a whole occurs'.[107] Thus there is wariness in relation to Coventry of over-reading an integrative momentum into the actions of the Irish for the period under scrutiny which was the half century before 1900. This caution is also appropriate when it is obvious from Appendix 4 that some Irish had not up to 1880 modified their uncivil manner.

There is not available a 'correct' set, or weighting of criteria guidance, to facilitate assessment of the degree of integration. For example, evidence of integration using the 'daily' metrics of workplace engagement, intermarriage with the host, residential diffusion and the early preponderance of local-born Irish could be counterbalanced by a separation of consciousness acquired from their religion, by the receipt, for most, of sectarian schooling and of their continued celebration of Irish heritage. In Coventry, complexity is introduced to the issue, since over the final decades of the century the number of Irish-born should have fallen, which was the expected trajectory of decline as

[105] Pooley, Segregation or integration? p. 81
[106] O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour, p. 40
[107] Panayi, *Immigration History of Britain, Multicultural Racism since 1800*, p. 122

the post-Famine cohort aged. However these failing numbers were boosted by the rejuvenating tranche of freshly arrived Irish migrants seeking work in cycle factories. It is to be noted O'Day saw in the Irish in Britain a vibrancy that supported their integration.[108] As a people the Irish had a dynamic rather than static outlook fixed on cultural isolation and could accommodate over time to the cultural routines and manners of the host. Not pressured on a day-to-day basis to show garb or facial hair-style markers of a contrary culture, they were not visually distinguishable and could mingle successfully with the host.

Nationally the tempo of integration could vary. Ziesler cautioned against accepting runaway integration. On the large quantum of late nineteenth century Birmingham Irish, she remarked 'that if most of the second generation Irish were moving towards the mainstream it is not likely that many of them managed to move very far'. She saw improved but still limited opportunity for the Irish to achieve social and occupational mobility, yet 'the pressures for assimilation were countered by others equally strong'.[109] To her, the opposing influences were that of being reared in areas that remained Irish, coupled with attendance at Catholic schools and churches.

Fielding referred to Roberts description of Salford in the first quarter of the twentieth century which portrayed a working-class with a hierarchical culture which considered the Irish to be inferior due to their rural background, their nationality and their religion. The relationship could be framed as a 'them' and 'us' situation. While Fielding also gave evidence that there could be neighbourly co-existence he concluded that the friendliness was superficial and 'the cultural bias against Irish Catholics remained an omnipresent, if latent force'.[110] For this large city that seemed a stagnant scenario where integration found no encouragement. In Stafford, a city much smaller in scale, Herson found 'ethnic fade' to have quickly occurred. He stated that contrary to the evidence in large cities there was not much to be gained by remaining separate in Stafford and the logical course in a small town with a small Irish population, if not leaving for another location, was for the Irish to integrate.[111] Pooley remarked that in Liverpool the large Irish community gave an opportunity for the Irish to withdraw into an Irish area but that in a smaller town like Lancaster daily interaction with the host

[108] O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour, p. 40
[109] Ziesler, *Irish in Birmingham*, pp. 133-134
[110] Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 34
[111] Herson, Migration, 'community' or integretation? pp. 181-182

population was inevitable.[112] In the smaller city of Coventry this level of interaction was also likely to occur and made integration the most realistic outcome.

In Coventry if integration was to occur it would commence by 'English' and 'Irish' acceptance of each other at street level. In assessing the level of acceptance it is hard to detect how fixed working class attitudes were in Coventry in the manner that Fielding described for Salford. Though much has been written on Coventry regarding municipal evolution, city personalities, and industrial developments, there has been little expounded on working-class consciousness and its judgementalism at local level. Sheldon provided some assistance of this context when she wrote that the authorities in the 1880s seeking to prosecute parents with truanting children may have targeted certain, streets or yards based on their reputation. She said not only did the attendance officers know of the 'fine gradations of the working-class social scale' these nuances were also known to residents of each neighbourhood even if it had a varied occupational composition.[113] The degree, if any, to which these working-class residents were tolerant, classist, racist, xenophobic or anti-Catholic in attitude which would in part dictate how they might respond to the Irish living close to them is unknown.[114] One telling factor is that in Coventry there was little hesitation before complaints were made before the magistrates. The absence of mention in court reports of rows between Irish and English neighbours suggests a modicum of harmony existed.[115] It is suggested any potential for confrontation was lessened by the fact that as the years passed Irish families with different degrees of Irish cultural expression came to know and only select yards and streets that would be appropriate for their level of expression. Irish families that included a British-born partner may have found easier acceptance in the back-streets.

In Coventry the discerned penchant for Irish intra-city residential movement allowed their settlement pattern over time to become diffuse which in turn assisted integration. A further integrational boost derived from the fact that most 'Irish' children were born in Coventry (Table 5.17 showed 80.0% or 412 in 1871) and would have, given it was their homeplace, an instinctual familiarity with the essence of the city. However the most significant factor increasing the accord between the Irish and host

---

[112] Pooley, Segregation or integration? p. 79 He pointed out that maps depicting residence are static and 'false' since they do not convey the daily intermixing that was likely to have occurred.

[113] Sheldon, Families in the firing line, p. 27. She also remarked that families were influenced by the 'habits' of the street or yard. She referred to the topography of Coventry that facilitated the avoidance of detection by school attendance officers because there was behind the main streets 'a hidden world of back-to-back houses'. It is suggested many of the post-Famine Irish liked that aspect of the city.

[114] The late century infusion of workers from outside Coventry may have softened any narrow-minded attitudes of the locals.

[115] Rare examples of confrontation: One incident is furnished in Appendix 2: Thomas McLean. Two incidents are furnished in Appendix 4: 15th July 1859 and 9th July 1876.

populations was the wide extent of intermarriage (Table 5.3 showed 51.6% of 248 married couples in 1861; 63.4% of 191 in 1871).

The smooth alignment of those of Irish heritage with the prevailing conventions of British society was assisted by the relaxed ambience of the city. In the process of alignment Coventry acted as a complaisant platform on which the Irish could persevere with those cultural and religious vestiges of significance to them. This continued opportunity for the Irish to secure cultural comfort andconnection with their roots, if only on St. Patrick's Day, maintained Irish calmness. This study outlined how Coventry induced less defensive based group cohesion. The atmosphere prompting O'Leary remarks on Wales that native 'hostility was a powerful solvent of divisions in immigrant ranks and helped to create a context within which a new shared identity could be forged' was absent in Coventry.[116] This study outlined that both the power of native bitterness and intra-Irish divisional impasse were never so serious in Coventry for the former to induce a cohesion on the latter from which sprung a fresh congruent identity.

The workplace was shown to be an agent of integration.[117] The children of the first wave, grew up identified as 'children of weavers' and with that common denominator and interest married the grown 'children of weavers' in the wider populace.[118] Coventry's industrial renaissance, truly manifest in the final decade of the century, crucially saw an Irish-born numerical boost which modified the vista of a relict community occurring in Coventry, similar to that recognised by Herson in prospect in Stafford by the 1920s.

The study identified the Irish in Coventry at the end of the century as comprised of a number of Irish-born who arrived in the previous decade, and by many who were born and settled in Coventry, some of whom were interested in Irish culture, and astir with enthusiasm for learning Gaelic, the most potent denotation of Irish identity. It also encountered second-generation Irish such as Charles Murray who came from Birmingham attracted by the recent upswing of industry in Coventry.

Those regarded as Irish would appear, as the century progressed, to have possessed a dual sense of being. They were not readily distinguishable as Irish if they

---

[116] O'Leary, *Irish in Wales*, p. 113

[117] It was noted that the Dorans could and did become freemen of the city. McLean was involved with the weavers of Gosford Street, while James Doran was a spokesman for the workers seeking greater wages in 1871.

[118] In 1861 H7C11Cox Street, Margaret Godfrey [Doran], 39, silk picker from Dublin was living with William Godfrey 40 silk weaver, and their daughter Maryann, 16, silk winder, and William, 11, all locally born. She was daughter of Thomas and Mary Doran weavers from Dublin who settled in Coventry on or before 1840 initially in Hertford Street. They are referred to extensively in Chapter 6. William lived with his parents, James, 40, weaver and Elizabeth, 40, in Freeth St in 1841. These streets were all in the one vicinity. HO107/1152.Book 8.17.29 ED 16; RG9/2201.39.12 ED 3; HO107/1152.Book 1.29.9 ED 2

chose not to display their social flourishes of Irishness and placed their religious particularity aside. It would appear they possessed what Gilley and Swift referred to as 'curious combination of achieved Irish integration and acceptance with a surviving Irish apartness'.[119]

John Denvir addressed a Coventry meeting of the Irish National league in 1889 which was chaired by second-generation Michael Burke who was born in Coventry and married to Rosannah also Coventry-born.[120] In 1891 their seven children mentioned as residing with them in the census would have attended local Catholic schools; 4 were still scholars.[121] A decade later the Catholic children from these schools: St. Osburg's (total 420) and St. Mary's (total 250) joined other children parading through Coventry on Coronation celebration day in August 1902. They sang the National Anthem in the parade led by eight massed bands. A process of inevitable change appears underway. Michael, though born in Coventry, actively recognised his Irishness which was transmitted by his Irish-born parents. His children were also born in Coventry, and though educated as Catholics and thus marked as different, time and the institutional loyalty of the Church seemed to have placed them and children like them, in common with the rest of Coventry in circumstances where British allegiance was to be taken for granted.

The 'second generation' is commonly regarded as an *en bloc* group that followed-on from the Famine years' incursionists, but the second generation was a rolling phenomenon from even before those years. Ziesler reminds that it was less than fixed as

---

The *Standard* 1st January 1864 recorded that 'On the 25th ult, at the Roman Catholic Church Thomas Turner married Miss Ann McGowran, both of this city.' Thomas Turner was son of Coventry-born weaver William Turner. Ann was Coventry-born daughter of Dublin-born weavers James McGowran and Ann McGowran. Her older brother was William the Liberal Councillor. Both families lived in Freeth St./Jordan Well where the children obviously knew each other and would eventually marry. In 1871 her younger brother John was a boarder with them. While the newspaper announcement followed the customary pattern the words 'both of the city' epitomised the reality for many migrants and their children. Ann could not be captured after 1851 by a normal census trawl seeking Irish, 'She only came to attention because of her distinguishing family name. *Coventry Standard* 1st January 1864; HO107/2067.38.23 ED 2; HO107/2067.119.26 ED 6; RG9/2201.27.15 ED 2; RG10/3178.91.17 ED 35

[119] Sheridan Gilley and Roger Swift, Introduction, in S. Gilley and R. Swift (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City*, (London 1985) p. 10

[120] *Coventry Times* 14th August 1889. See lengthier reference in Appendix 2 from same edition. Assuming it was the Michael Burke born in Coventry in 1849.

[121] See Appendix 9. The most likely Michael Burke was a watchmaker born in Coventry in 1849 to Mayo-born labourer Peter Burke and Mayo-born Bridget. See Table 3.2. What is particularly significant is that Michael, though showing Irish identity on meeting Denvir, had through his Coventry birth and move from his parent's home by 1871, become undetectable as an *Irishcom* during the normal census trawl using 'Ireland' as birthplace filter. Also although reared in Greyfriars Lane he was subsequently found in houses around the city, indicating the absence of any clustering mentality in the second-generation. He died in Mar 1922; leaving Charles McGowran, son of William, to take out probate. He left £266 in his will, the equivalent of £11,182 in 2018. His life shows some occupational and social mobility over his father Peter (England & Wales, National probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1966. 1922, Michael Burke).

a group, and that e.g. in 1881 it could include someone born in 1875 or 1850. Those born in the latter year were much more likely to follow their father's occupation while those in the former could take advantage of new opportunities in the job market.[122] This study also found at the end of the century that few sons followed the occupation of their fathers, because they had opportunities which they took, in cycle workshops, that were not available to their fathers when young men.

Allowing for the nature of such occasions when corporates attempt to present their affairs in a favourable light, the following report at the end of the century must still have some substance. Under a headline: Coventry 'An Anglo-Irish Town' the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* reported on the annual meeting of the Dunlop Pneumatic Tyre Company held in London.[123] After completing his remarks on the financial position of the company the chairman alluded to the remarks that had been made as to the "Irish element" in the company. He said 'this was explained by the fact that the company originated in Ireland. When the work was transferred from Dublin to Coventry, the employees all had the option of coming over to England. Coventry was now an Anglo-Irish town. A great many people would not know who were Irishmen and who were Englishmen'.[124]

The Coventry setting of this study should provide a contribution to findings on the Irish in British cities by serving as a measure, devoid of the worst of those complicating variables of intolerance and influx, against which Irish in other cities may be

---

[122] Ziesler, *Irish in Birmingham*, pp. 134-135

[123] *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 5th July 1898; The term Anglo-Irish came to notice in 1894 when an Anglo-Irish Cycling Club was established by 'some few energetic Irishmen and Saxon Friends [who] met together to prove the much-talked-of barrier between the races existed not, but instead a feeling of right good fellowship'. In 1896 it was said 'They were correct in their views; the barrier between the Englishmen and Irishmen in Coventry at least, was imaginary, and since its inception the club has been noticeable mostly for the harmony existing within its ranks…' The club which was non-political and non-sectarian had originated within the Pneumatic Tyre Co, many of whose employees were members. A club house was opened in High Street in 1896, however two years later the club appears to have been in financial difficulty. The club rooms were taken over to be run as a private club. Dr Callaghan who was involved in the running of the Anglo-Irish club became chairman of the committee running this club. (*Coventry Evening Telegraph* 8th April 1895, 24th July 1896, 25th February 1899).

[124] The remark was made by Du Cros (See Appendix 2: Arthur DuCros). The *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 6th July 1898 took umbrage at the description of Coventry as an Anglo-Irish town. Its comment while complimentarily laced with welcome for the Irish, recognising their 'hearty, good-humoured characteristics, the athletic prowess of many of them, and their generous participation in many of our public movements' stated 'we deprecate being so described [as an Anglo-Irish town]'. It continued: 'If there is one city more essentially English than another it is the good old city of Coventry, situated as it is in the very heart of England, and retaining many of its old English features'. It concluded that on hearing Du Cros remark that in Coventry many people would not know who were Irishmen and Englishmen, it could 'scarcely restrain a gasp of surprise'. The article may have written with tongue-in-cheek, but it is possible that the newspaper may have found such an opiniated remark from the confident Irish Du Cros entrepreneurship, who brought employment to Coventry, and who were different from the unpresuming 'Celtic Catholic Irish' somewhat hard to digest.

examined.[125] The elaboration in the study on the methodology used to handle the features and failings of the census source material should be of value to others in elsewhere research. Investigations of the Irish in large volumes in urban contexts lend towards generalisation and aggregated display. Advantage should be taken of the fact that the small city with its manageable scale permits, both a more comprehensive depiction of Irish experience, and precise observation of the nature of interface behaviour between migrant and host. This can make results available with a more finger-tip sifted quality. This study concurs with Herson that interpreting the experience of the Irish within a family framework is the key to understanding Irish settlement and to unlocking the subtleties within the Irish-born mass.[126]

Studies on Irish nineteenth century migrants, have been produced in such a variety of formats and styles that it raises for question what scale, pitch and depth of investigation, most fittingly conveys the ultimate truth of Irish migrant experience. Generalised works it has been suggested have a greater likelihood of referring to the 'Irish' in collective terms and that it may be first-generation Irish-born Famine migrants they are contemplating on when referring to these 'Irish'. The focus of many locally based studies lies within the frame of 1845 to 1870, and perhaps a decade on either side.[127] This was a time of particular urban and social upheaval, of religious zeal and resentment, and when British national identity was strengthened. In these heightened circumstances, and given the migrants' voluminous intrusion, residential plight, and othering, historical accounts of Irish settlement have been largely grim in their telling. There are many such studies concerned with this desolate period which may lend weight to the fallacious impression that their findings represented the very quintessence of Irish experience for the entire century.

---

[125] The provision of context was of importance to this study. There was awareness also of the risk in the presentation of statistics, that too severe a dichotomic relationship between Irish and host might be portrayed. There was at heart an imbalance in the comparison between the Irish and host population figures which ranged over the period from being 50 to 170 the size of the Irish-born population. The latter may also have been too readily assumed to be overtly uniform, stable and pecunious compared to the restiveness of Irish settlement.

[126] Herson, Migration, 'community' or integretation? p. 160. Herson in his later work took a wide view of who qualified to be included in a family.

[127] When commenting in 1993 on the targeting of studies on the period 1845-1870 MacRaild accounted for the tight period focus as the result of the limited availability of census enumeration books due to the 100 year rule. He noted academic interest can be stimulated by the arresting nature of epic migrations. Scholarly attention was drawn to interpret the great numerical impact of the Famine on Britain with those fleeing from it intensifying the powerful negative images which the British already had of the Irish. Study was not protracted to the later century because the numbers migrating to Britain in that period were low, and owing to the presumption that the Irish had become assimilated. (D.M. MacRaild, Review of Steven Fielding Class and Ethnicity: Irish Catholics in England, 1880-1939, *Labour History Review*, Vol. 58, No. 2, Autumn 1993 pp. 44, 47).

Drawing on examples of Irish reactions, perhaps of different vintage, from a variety of locations, some the product of excited local circumstances e.g. Stopfordian riots, or the outcome of bespoke study e.g. Wulfrunian crime, or in descriptions of establishment minded writers e.g. Mancunian Irish squalour, a representation of Irish migrant experience may be confected that is larger than the sum of its parts. Selected examples from cities may leave a global impression of police or judicial prejudice towards the Irish; bias which was not apparent in Coventry. Research centred on areas containing large numbers of Irish may provide conclusions on cultural vibrancy or residential isolation that may only exist, or have been sustained in those areas by virtue of those numbers.[128] A large city with large Irish numbers is more likely to be able to supply evidence based answers on its experience than a smaller city. In addition, the absence of in-depth accounts may leave the impression that the small city did not have any matters of interest or concern and that such were only a feature in the large city. Roberts picked up in Manchester the irritation of long resident Irish migrants caused by the embarrassing antics of unsocialised newer Irish arrivals.[129] There was a similar incursive wave of Irish in late century Coventry, but while there is no evidence to show that it caused resentment among longer resident Irish, meaning cannot be taken from absence of validation either.[130]

Large volume cities may have had a variable character of welcome or hostility and may have had periods of trade and industrial expansion or stagnation; the period from whence Irish examples are taken from these cities can influence perception. Again, large Irish numbers were found in metropolises which may have experienced issues unique to such cities due to the very size of their metropolitan population; problems such as pressure on accommodation that then shaped a particular Irish response. Or such cities may have had class or employment traditions particular to themselves. Fielding forwarded the view that couples did not marry outside their religion in Manchester.[131] This may have been the practice that occurred there, not only as the result of its expected promotion by the Church, but because it was feasible due to the large number of Catholics in the city and the presence of Irish clubs where Catholics had the

---

[128] Fielding observed that a large community might provoke more hostility but it would also promote the development of ethnic institutions that would shield migrants from its force. (Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, pp. 27, 43).
[129] Roberts, *The Classic Slum*, p. 110. See Appendix 19.
[130] In Birmingham an inspector of the borough police told the manager of a licensed house that, if meetings of the Land League continued to be held in his house, the license would be opposed in due course. Whereon the League was refused permission by the manager to meet in the premises. (*Dublin Weekly Nation* 3rd December 1881). Such officious behaviour by the police might have also occurred in Coventry even though no record of it exists.
[131] Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 71

opportunity to find a partner.[132] Whereas in Coventry the same sized availability of Catholic potential marriage partners was not available so relationships may as a result have not only crossed ethnic groupings but also religious ones.[133]

This study makes the case that authenticity, especially over the long-term, is best served by more exemplification from micro-studies based on the reveal of a number of censuses within an agreed common research format. Stemming from the experience of this study a strategy to increase inter-study compatibility would along with other issues, determine who in the census would be considered Irish, settle on the enumeration book area as the base unit of spatial expression and embrace family as the unit of focus.

This study promotes the desirability of greater articulation around family transition, as revealed by the census and shown in this study, as a direction for the future. This pathway, particularly where a centurial span for investigation is mooted, appears to offer fruitful understandings on migrant processes of settlement and adaptation. It may offer insight into family structure that gave migrants support and facilitated cultural continuance outside of clustered conditions. In terms of migrant mobility it may inform on whether their prolonged settlement in an urbanity remains a function of employment availability, or due to roots having been set down.[134] It is to be realized that in the pursuance of household data, locked in the census, the rich insights it releases are only slowly obtained by patient squeezing. The value of this process may in the critical academic balance, sadly be outweighed by short-sighted claims that the pursuit of household data is a mundane task, with management and presentation of unwieldy data an issue, and as a process lacking intellectual reach and capacity to provide ebullient conclusions.[135]

The study has demonstrated the distinctive character of the small city and acknowledged its policemen, clergy, industrialists, opinion formers and notability that integrally influenced the response to its Irish townspeople. The circumstances of some prominent citizens with discreet Irish connections e.g. John Gulson, Coventry's foremost citizen was married to an Irish-born, as was another mayor, of eight occasions,

---

[132] Fielding refers to the social disapproval that prevented Protestants from marrying Catholics, and draws attention to Roberts (*The Classic Slum*) remark that even Protestant slum dwellers felt marrying a Catholic was beneath them. (Ibid., p. 71). No evidence of such disapproval could be found in Coventry.

[133] This study cannot provide the religious affiliation of marriage partners but it showed in Table 5.3 that intermarriage was common. However some of these British-born partners may have been second generation Irish.

[134] Even if effort nowhere approaches the heroic scale of Herson's lifelong work laid out in *Divergent Paths*.

[135] Tables 5.14 and 6.5 serve as examples of data appearing as if in an unwieldy assemblage. Yet the reality is they have been carefully cast, to best display information, that has been highly honed from a large body of scattered census material, in order to reveal, as they do, migrant process, and interaction between Irish and Non-Irish at their Coventry interface.

Albert Tomson, must have had some influence, however intangible, on how the nineteenth century Irish-born were perceived.[136] The prestige of Irish-born persons materializes in Tables 5.25 and 6.12 when a social Class 1 or 2 filter is applied to census details.

The study showed that Irish-born personages and their occupational activities, certainly in the higher social echelons, had altered much over a half-century, as perusal of recently mentioned Table 5.25 and it continuation Table 6.12 reveals. It provided evidence that there emerged over time what Swift and Gilley described as a 'rich yet diverse migrant culture within which a variety of Irish identities coexisted'.[137] Heinrick's observation in 1872 that saw the Irish as subaltern victims where they were mostly the 'hewers of wood and the drawers of water' does not represent the fullness of their encounter with Coventry. Many of the Irish in Coventry would not, as Inglis remarked of the Irish in England, have remained stranded in the lowest stratum of society, out of which they seldom lifted.[138] While no doubt, especially due to the onset of old age, a number would be found in straitened circumstances, later generations appeared to have satisfactorily advanced from the lumpen circumstances of some in the post-Famine years to a general correspondence in occupational class with the host.[139] The fillip to Coventry fortunes due to the success of the cycle and follow-on industry was particularly important in giving equal entry to steady employment and potential for material advance to the generations that succeeded the Famine-time arrivals.

Table 6.13 showed 37.2% averaged over 1881-1901 of male-Irish married heads of *Irish Households* were in occupations Class 3.[140] With reservation already expressed about the level of skill that could find itself meriting Class 3 inclusion, it shows the progress of the Irish. However the extent of such progress would be confined as Fielding reminded when he referred to the rigidity of England's class divisions: 'Movement between classes was rarely accomplished, whatever the individual's ethnic background…any improvement [of majority of Irish] was achieved within the working class.'[141]

---

[136] Both of their wives were also prominent in their own right. Second-generation Basil Riley also featured among notable Coventry citizenry (Appendix 2).
[137] Swift, Identifying the Irish in Victorian Britain, p. 2
[138] K.S. Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England*, (London 1963) p. 121
[139] O'Day, Survey of the Irish, p. 39
[140] These percentages represent Irish-born (a relatively reduced total in 1881 but a higher total in 1901 due to the arrival of fresh immigrants), however the local-born Irish may have had even greater representation in this Class.
[141] Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 30

Coventry was shown to present aspects of a typical midland Victorian city. It also had to Irish advantage a moderate population and compact areal size that helped give it a 'small-town' intimacy. It possessed a community spirit that was only recognised to have been present and of value when it had been lost at century end.[142] To the Irish its parochial sociability was a comforting replication of that found in provincial Irish towns. The collapse of 1860 reduced the numbers of Irish to a ratio with the total population figure that was more conducive to harmony and incorporation rather than social detachment. Coventry had a particular location that created its own outcomes for the Irish. It seemed beyond the force of the rollout from the intense Famine influx zone of Lancashire. Adjacency to regionally significant Birmingham relieved Coventry of its unsettled Irish, and also drew away virulent preachers with their potential to create tension.

This study relied heavily on two sources, the census and city newspapers. The former showed aggregated details of interest e.g. the balance between Irish-born and local-born Irish was heavily in favour of the latter even at mid-century. In data terms at least, the 'Irish' quickly became largely a comprisal of those born locally. Aspinwall and McCaffrey remarked: 'The problem with immigrant studies is that groups have to be examined in aggregates so that they become 'the Irish'…but their story has to be considered as the sum of individual experience'.[143] Thus this study was keen to render from the census more than 'Irish' totals, which may lend to a supposition of Irish homogeneity. It was also wary of the production and comparison of 'street' totals, since such summations could not take adequate account of the fact many streets might have harboured two differing social-status layers, one comprised of those in street-fronting houses and the other from those in the courtyards directly behind. The study domain of Coventry contained both a relatively moderate size city population and a modest Irish one; it was of a dimension that facilitated interrogation of the census in order to provide results arranged at a more intimate household level. It was to show the importance of the family as the stabilising unit for many whose destiny it was to become Coventry Irish.

While the census can assist in determining the character of Irish diversity, by supplying data on regional origin in Ireland and on occupations, it little facilitates, assessment of the issue that perhaps most interests the nineteenth century historian. That relates to the nature of the identity of subsequent generations. The evidence regarding

---

[142] 'The City of Coventry: Social history from 1700', pp. 222-241

[143] Aspinwall B. and McCaffrey J.F., A comparative view of the Irish in Edinburgh in the nineteenth century, in Gilley S. and Swift R. (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City* (London 1985) p. 131

this which the census provides relates only to occupations, mixed marriages, and birthplace. It is too elemental and static in form to provide deep insight into the sense of identity held, or degree of acculturation undergone by follow-on generations. Herson, in a phrase that combined astuteness and succinctness, construed this process as involving 'the replacement of Irish identity by a more neutral Irish heritage'.[144] Given census disobligement of evidence on the matter, it is hoped that newspaper archives have been quarried sufficiently, not only to extract information on the city's compact ambience for context, but also to allow this study to illustrate how tempered Irish identity had become by the end of the century.

[144] Herson, *Divergent paths*, p. 304

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Manuscripts

Census Books for Enumeration Districts 1841-1901
Census 1911 Household Schedules
England & Wales, Birth, Marriage and Death Indexes 1837-1915
England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations) 1858-1920
All above available at: https://www.ancestry.co.uk/
'Coventry Annals', General Archives of the Union of the Sisters of Mercy of Great Britain, Handsworth, Birmingham
Coventry Police Force Annual Reports 1836-1900, Ref: CCPO, Coventry History Centre, Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Jordan Well, Coventry.
Finigan, Thomas Augustine. Journal of Thomas Augustine Finigan, 1837/8, Birmingham Central Library Archives
Home Office: Ecclesiastical Census Returns 1851, National Archives HO 129/400 pp. 1-20
St. Mary and St. Laurence, Register of Baptisms, Family History Centre, National Archives, 1999854
St. Osburg's Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Deaths, Archdiocese of Birmingham Archives P140/1/2, P140/1/3
St. Osburg's Catholic Young Men's Society, Record 1858 to 1866, Coventry History Centre, PA 1821

Government Papers/Official Reports and Records

Census of Population, England and Wales1841-1901 at: http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/Show?page=Home
Census of Great Britain 1851, *Religious worship (England and Wales): Report and Tables* PP 1852–53 LXXXIX [1690] p. cclvi
Commission on the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture (1867). Second report of the commissioners, with Appendix Part I. PP 1868-69 [4202] [4202-I] p. 227
Enquiry undertaken by William Ranger, under the Public Health Act of 1848, *Coventry Standard* 29th June 1849
Fourth Report from Select Committee on the Poor Law Amendment Act, with the minutes of evidence. PP. 1837-38 XVIII Pt.I. [145]
General Register Office, *Classification of Occupations, Census 1951* (London 1956)
Greenhow, Edward Headlam. Second Report of the Medical Officer of the Privy Council 1860 PP 1860 XX1X.201[2736]
National Archives, MH 12/13378 Coventry 496, Correspondence with Poor law Unions
Reports and Communications on Vagrancy, PP 1847-48 LIII.235 [987]
Report from Select Committee on the Silk Trade: with the minutes of evidence, PP 1831-32 XIX.1 [678]
Report of George Nicholls on Poor Laws, Ireland, PP 1837 LVI p. 5
Report on the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain, Appendix G Part II, PP 1836 XXXIV https://archive.org/stream/op1245313-1001#page/n53/mode/2up
Report of the Royal Commission on the Hand-Loom Weavers, Assistant Commissioners Reports, Midland District, PP 1840 XXIV [217]
Report from the Select Committee on the Health of Towns 1840 (384)

Slaney, R.A. *Report on the State of Birmingham and other large towns* (London1845)
Second Report of Commissioners of Inquiry into the state of large towns and populous districts. Appendix, PP 1845 XVIII [602] [610]
Royal Commission on Labour. The agricultural labourer. PP 1893-94 [C.6894-VI] Vol. I. England. Part VI. p. 107

Newspapers & Magazines

Banbury Guardian
Birmingham Daily Gazette
Birmingham Daily Post
Birmingham Journal
Catholic Magazine
Coventry Herald and Observer
Coventry Standard
Coventry Times
Coventry Evening Telegraph
Drogheda Journal
Dublin Evening Mail,
Dublin Evening Post
Dublin Medical Press
Dublin Morning Register
Dublin Weekly Nation
Dublin Weekly Register
Falkirk Herald
Freeman's Journal
Glasgow Herald
Huddersfield Chronicle
Inverness Courier
Illustrated London News
Irish News and Belfast Morning News
Leicester Chronicle
Leicester Daily Post
Leicester Journal
Leicester Chronicle
Leamington Spa Courier
Saunder's News-Letter
The Scotsman
The Tablet
Warder and Dublin Weekly Mail
Worcestershire Chronicle
Available in the British Library, St. Pancras, London,
and at: https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/

Secondary Sources

Reading material

Alter, Peter, Symbols of Irish Nationalism, in Alan O'Day (ed.), *Reactions to Irish Nationalism 1865-1914*, (London 1987)
Anderson, Michael, *Family Structure in Nineteenth-Century Lancashire*, (London 1971)
Armstrong, W.A., The use of information about occupation, in E.A. Wrigley (ed.), *Nineteenth-century Society, Essays in the use of quantitative methods for the study of social data*, (Cambridge 1972)
Aspinwall, B. and McCaffrey, J.F., A comparative view of the Irish in Edinburgh in the nineteenth century, in S.Gilley and R. Swift (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City*, (London 1985)
Ashton, T.S., *The Industrial Revolution 1760-1830*, (London 1948)
Ayres, George, *History of the Mail Routes to Ireland until 1850*, (Lulu.com 2011)
Banks, J.A., The Contagion of Numbers, in H. J. Dyos & Michael Wolff (eds.), *The Victorian City: Images and Realities*, (London 1973)
Barclay, Tom, (Introduced by Danaher, Nessan) *Memoirs and Medleys: The Autobiography of a Bottle Washer*, (Coalville 1995)
Bates, Stephen, *Penny Loaves & Butter Cheap, Britain in 1846*, (London 2014)
Belchem, John, Class, creed and country: The Irish middle class in Victorian Liverpool, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain*, (London 1999)
Belchem, John, *Irish, Catholic and Scouse*, (Liverpool 2007)
Best, Geoffrey, *Mid-Victorian Britain 1851-75,*(London 1971)
Bossy, John, *The English Catholic Community 1570-1850*, (London 1995)
Brake, Laurel and Demoor, Marysa, (eds.) *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland*, (London 2009)
Briggs, Asa, *Victorian Cities*, (London 1963)
Brown, Callum G., *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1770*, (London 1987)
Brown, David, Cobden and the Press, in Anthony Howe & Simon Morgan (eds.), *Rethinking Nineteenth-century Liberalism: Richard Cobden Bicentenary Essays*, (Aldershot 2006)
Brown, Lynda, Irish Railway Workers and Soldiers in Wiltshire, in Graham Davis (ed.), *In search of a better life, British and Irish Migration*, (Stroud 2011)
Bunce, P.W., *The Story of Coventry*, (Stroud 2013)
Busteed, Mervyn, Identities in transition: Irish migrant outlooks in mid-Victorian Manchester, in D. George Boyce & Roger Swift (eds.), *Problems and Perspectives in Irish History since 1800*, (Dublin 2004)
Busteed, M, Resistance and Respectability: Dilemmas of Irish migrant politics in Victorian Britain, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *Irish Identities in Victorian Britain*, (Abingdon 2011)
Busteed, Mervyn, Little Islands of Erin: Irish settlement and Identity in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Manchester, in Donald M. MacRaild (ed.), *The Great Famine and Beyond: Irish Migrants in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (Dublin 2000)
Butler, Cuthbert, *The Life and Times of Bishop Ullathorne, 1806-1889*, (London 1926)
Cannon, Richard, *The Fourth, or Royal Irish Regiment of Dragoon Guards*, (London 1839)
Cannon, Richard, *The Fifth, or Prince Charlotte of Wales's Regiment of Dragoon Guards*, (London 1839)
Carlyle, Thomas, *Chartism*, (London 1842)

Carter, H., Towns and urban systems 1730-1914, in R.A. Dodgshon & R.A. Butlin (eds.), *An Historical Geography of England and Wales*, (London 1990)
Champ, Judith F., *William Bernard Ullathorne, 1806-1889: A Different Kind of Monk*, (Leominster 2006)
Chancellor, Valerie E., (ed.). *Master and Artisan in Victorian England*, (London 1969)
Chinn, Carl, 'Sturdy Catholic emigrants': the Irish in early Victorian Birmingham, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain*, (London 1999)
Chinn, Carl, *Poverty Amidst Prosperity: The Urban Poor in England, 1834-1914*, (Lancaster 2006)
Christian, Peter & Annal, David, *Census, The Expert Guide*, (Kew 2008)
Clark, G. Kitson, *The Making of Victorian England*, (London 1962)
Clucas, Marie & Carpenter, Mick, Who Cares? Irish Health inequalities in Coventry, (Coventry 2008)
Colley, Linda, *Britons, forging the Nation 1707-1837*, (London 1992)
Collier, Paul, *Exodus Immigration and Multiculturalism in the 21st Century*, (London 2013)
Collins, Brenda, Irish Emigration to Dundee and Paisley during the First Half of the Nineteenth Century, in J.M. Goldstrom and L.A. Clarkson (eds.), *Irish Population, Economy and Society: essays in honour of the late K.H. Connell*, (Oxford 1981)
Coventry Archives, *People to Coventry, Migration and settlement from Early Times*, (Coventry 1996)
Coventry Family History Society, *Mary Eaves, Midwife Spon End*, (Coventry 2000)
Cronin, Mike and Adair, Daryl, *The Wearing of the Green*, (London 2002)
Curley, Augustine J., The Identity of Edith O'Gorman, the 'Escaped Nun', http://www.academia.edu/1507333/The_Identity_of_Edith_O_Gorman_the_Escaped_Nun_
Cuthbert, Almond, *The History of Ampleforth Abbey*, (London 1903) pp. 339-342
Danaher, Nessan, Tom Barclay the Irishman, in *Memoirs and Medleys: The Autobiography of a Bottle Washer*, by Tom Barclay, (Coalville 1995)
Dare, Joseph, *Annual Reports of Leicester Domestic Mission Society*, (1846-63)
Davis, Graham, Little Irelands, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989)
Davis, Graham, *The Irish in Britain 1815-1914*, (Dublin 1991)
Davis, Graham, The Irish in Britain, 1815-1939, in Andrew Bielenberg (ed.), *The Irish Diaspora*, (London 2000)
Dennis, R., The Social Geography of Towns and Cities 1730-1914, in R.A. Dodgshon & R.A. Butlin (eds.), *An Historical Geography of England and Wales*, (London 1990)
Dennis, Richard, *English Industrial Cities of the Nineteenth Century*, (Cambridge 1984)
Denvir, John, *The Irish in Britain*, (London 1892)
Denvir, John, *Life Story of an Old Rebel*, (Dublin 1910)
http://www.gutenberg.org/files/16559/16559.txt.
Dickson, David, *Dublin*, *The Making of a Capital City*, (London 2014)
Dolin, Tim, *George Eliot*, (Oxford 2005)
Dormer, Mary, *The Story of Coventry*, (London 1911)
Duffy, Patrick J., Landscape, in Alan Counihan (ed.), *Townlands*, (Dublin 2012)
Engels, Friedrich, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, (London 1891)
Evans, Daniel, *The Life and Work of William Williams: M.P. for Coventry 1835-1847, M.P. for Lambeth 1850-1865*, (Llandysul 1939)
Evans, R.J., *The Victorian Age 1815-1914*, (London 1968)
Fielding, Steven, *Class and Ethnicity: Irish Catholics in England, 1880-1939*, (Buckingham 1993)

Finnegan, Frances, *Poverty & Prejudice: A Study of Irish Immigrants in York 1840-1875*, (Cork 1982)
Fitzpatrick, D., A peculiar tramping people, the Irish in Britain, 1801-70, in W.E. Vaughan (ed.), *A New History of Ireland, Vol. 5*, (Oxford 1989)
Fitzpatrick, David, A curious middle place: the Irish in Britain, 1871-1921, in Sheridan Gilley & Roger Swift (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989)
Fortescue, J.W., *A History of the 17th Lancers*, (London 1895)
Garner, Steve, *Racism in the Irish Experience*, (London 2004)
Gilley, Sheridan and Swift, Roger, Introduction, in S. Gilley and R. Swift (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City*, (London 1985)
Gilley, Sheridan, English Attitudes to the Irish in England, 1780-1900, in Colin Holmes (ed.), *Immigrants and Minorities in British Society*, (London 1978)
Gilley, Sheridan, Papists, Protestants and the Irish in London, 1835-70, in G.J Cuming & Derek Baker (eds.), *Popular Belief and Practice*, (Cambridge 1972)
Gilley, Sheridan, Roman Catholicism and the Irish in England, in Donald M. MacRaild (ed.), *The Great Famine and Beyond: Irish Migrants in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (Dublin 2000)
Gilley, Sheridan, English Catholic Attitudes to Irish Catholics, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *Irish Identities in Victorian Britain*, (Abingdon 2011)
Goodman, Ruth, *How to be a Victorian*, (London 2014)
Gordon, **John**, *Protestantism, Five Lectures Delivered in the Great Meeting-House, Coventry*, (London 1842)
Griffin, Emma, *Liberty's Dawn: A People's History of the Industrial Revolution*, (New Haven & London 2013)
Haley, Bruce, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture*, (Harvard 1978)
Handley, J.E., *The Irish in Scotland*, *1798-1945*, (Cork 1943)
Handley, J.E., *The Irish in Modern Scotland*, (Cork 1947)
Harper, Charles George, The Holyhead Road, (London 1902) at: https://archive.org/stream/holyheadroadmail01harpuoft/holyheadroadmail01harpuoft_djvu.txt
Harris, R.G., *The Irish Regiments 1683-1999*, (Staplehurst Kent 1989)
Harrison, J.F.C., *Early Victorian Britain, 1832-5*, (London 1971)
Hawkins, Angus, *Victorian Political Culture: 'Habits of Heart and Mind'*, (Oxford 2015)
Heimann, Mary, *Catholic Devotion in Victorian England*, (Oxford 1995)
Hennell, Mary, *An Outline of the various Social Systems & Communities which have founded on the principle of Co-operation with an introductory essay, by the author of 'The Philosophy of Necessity'*, (London 1844)
Her Religious Children, *Life of Mother Margaret Mary Hallahan*, (New York 1869)
Herson, John, Irish migration and settlement in Victorian Britain: a small town perspective, in S. Gilley & R. Swift (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989)
Herson, John, Migration, 'community' or integration? Irish families in Victorian Stafford', in Swift Roger& Gilley Sheridan (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain* (London 1999)
Herson, John, Irish immigrant families in the English West Midlands: a long term view, 1830-1914, in J. Belchem, & K. Tenefelde (eds.), *Irish and Polish migration in comparative perspective*, (Essen 2003)
Herson, John, *Divergent paths: Family Histories of Irish Emigrants in Britain 1820-1920*, (Manchester 2015)
Hickey, John, *Urban Catholics*, (London 1967)
Hickman, Mary J., *Religion, Class and Identity*, (Aldershot 1995)

Hickman, Mary J. and Bronwen, Walter, *Discrimination and the Irish Community in Britain: A Report of Research Undertaken for the Commission for Racial Equality*, (London 1997)
Hickman, Mary J., Alternative historiographies of the Irish in Britain: a critique of the segregation/assimilation model, in Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain*, (London 1999)
Hickman, Mary J., Incorporating and Denationalizing the Irish in England: the role of the Catholic Church', in Patrick O'Sullivan (ed.), *The Irish World Wide, History, Heritage, Identity* Vol. 5: *Religion and Identity*, (Leicester 1996)
Higgs, Edward, Making *Sense of the Census Revisited*, (London 2005)
Hobbs, Andrew, *A Fleet Street in Every Town: The Provincial Press in England, 1855-1900*, (Cambridge 2018)
Hobsbawn, E.J., *Industry and Empire*, (London 1968)
Hoppen, Karl Theodore, *The Mid-Victorian Generation, 1846-1886*, (Oxford 1998)
Holmes, Colin, Introduction: Immigrants and minorities in Britain Society, in Colin Holmes (ed.), *Immigrants and Minorities in British Society*, (London 1978)
Hunt, Cathy, *The National Federation of Women Workers, 1906-1921*, (Basingstoke 2015)
Inglis, K.S., *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England*, (London 1963).
Jackson, Daniel M., *Popular opposition to Irish Home Rule in Edwardian Britain*, (Liverpool 2009)
Jackson, J.A., *The Irish in Britain*, (London 1963)
Jeffes, Kristina, The Irish in Early Victorian Chester: An Outcast Community?, in Roger Swift (ed.), *Victorian Chester*, (Liverpool 1996)
Jenkins, T.A., *The Liberal Ascendancy 1830-1886*, (Houndmills, Basingstoke 1994)
Jones, Robin, *West Coast*, (Horncastle 2012)
Kelly & Co., *Directories of Warwickshire, 1880, 1884,1888, 1896*, (London 1896)
Kiernan, Reginald Hugh, *The Story of the Archdiocese of Birmingham*, (West Bromwich 1951)
Kimberley, Damien, *Coventry's Bicycle Heritage*, (Stroud 2015)
KiKitson Clarke, G., *The Making of Victorian England*, (London 1962)
Large, D., The Irish in Bristol in 1851: a census enumeration, in S. Gilley & R. Swift (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian city*, (London 1985)
Lees, L.H., Patterns of lower-class life: Irish slum Communities in nineteenth century London, in S.Thernstrom & R.Sennett (eds.), *Nineteenth century cities*, (New Haven 1969)
Lees, L.H., *Exiles of Erin: Irish migrants in Victorian London*, (Cornell 1979)
Light, Alison, *Common People*, (London 2014)
Lowe, Norman, *Modern British History*, (Basingstoke 2009)
Lowe, W. J., *The Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire: The Shaping of a Working-Class Community*, (New York 1989)
Lumas, Susan, *Making use of the Census*, (London 1997)
Lynch, Hannah, *Autobiography of a Child*, (New York 1899)
http://hdl.handle.net/2027/iau.31858006144392
MacAmhlaigh, Donall, *An Irish Navvy, The Diary of an Exile*, (London 1964)
MacAtasney, Gerard, *The Other Famine*, (Dublin 2010)
MacRaild, Donald M., *Culture, Conflict and Migration: The Irish in Victorian Cumbria*, (Liverpool 1998).
MacRaild, Donald M., *Irish Migrants in Modern Britain, 1750-1922*, (Basingstoke 1999)

MacRaild, Donald M., William Murphy, the Orange Order and communal violence: the Irish in West Cumberland, 1871-84, in Panikos Panayi (ed.), *Racial violence in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (London 1996)
Magee, Sean, *Weavers and Related Trades, Dublin 1826*, (Dun Laoghaire 1995)
Mallinson, Allan, *The Making of the British Army*, (London 2009) p. 200
Mangion, Carmen M., The 'Mixed Life': Challenging Understandings of Religious Life in Victorian England, in Laurence Lux-Sterritt & Carmen M. Mangion (eds.), *Gender, Catholicism and Spirituality: Women and the Roman Catholic Church in Britain and Europe, 1200-1900*, (Basingstoke 2011)
Marcus, Steven, Reading the Illegible, in H.J. Dyos and Michael Wolff (eds.), *The Victorian city: Images and Realities*, (London 1976)
Mathew, David, *Catholicism in England, 1535-1935. Portrait of a minority: Its Culture and Tradition*, (London 1936)
McGrory, David, *The City of Coventry, Images From The Past*, (Upton 1996)
McGrory, David, *A History of Coventry*, (Stroud 2004)
McKinley, R.A., (ed), The City of Leicester: Social and administrative history since 1835, in *A History of the County of Leicester: Vol. 4: The City of Leicester, VCH/British History Online*, (London 1958)
McLaughlin, Eve, *The Censuses 1841-1891, Use and interpretation*, (Aylesbury 1998)
Meacham, Standish, A Life Apart, The English Working Class 1890-1914, (London 1977)
Member of the Order of Mercy, *Leaves from the Annals of The Sisters of Mercy,* Vol. 2, (New York 1885)
Midgley, Patricia, *The Churches and the Working Classes: Leeds, 1870-1920*, (Newcastle-upon-Tyne 2012)
Miles, Andrew, *Social Mobility in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century England*, (Houndmills, Basingstoke 1999)
Miskell, Louise, Irish immigrants in Cornwall: the Camborne experience, 1861-82, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain*, (London 1999)
Monkkonen, Eric, Residential Mobility in England and the United States, in *Themes in British and American History, a comparative approach: Focus Point 5 and 6 Essays, Citizenship, Equality and Industrialisation, 1830-1890, Cities and the Social Order, c1850 -1970*, (Milton Keynes 1985)
Moran, James, *Irish Birmingham*, (Liverpool 2010)
Neal, Frank, *Black '47: Britain and the Famine Irish*, (Houndmills Basingstoke 1998)
Neal, Frank, *The Irish in Nineteenth century Britain: integrated or assimilated?* (Salford 1994) http://www.academia.edu/566130/The_Irish_in_19th_Century_Britain-_Integrated_or_Assimilated
Neal, Frank, Irish settlement in the north-east and north-west of England in the mid-nineteenth century, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain*, by (London 1999)
Neal, Frank, The Foundations of the Irish Settlement in Newcastle upon Tyne: The Evidence in the 1851 Census, in Donald MacRaild (ed.), *The Great Famine and Beyond: Irish Migrants in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (Dublin 2000)
Neal, Frank, The English Poor Law, the Irish migrant and the laws of settlement and removal, 1819-1879, in D. George Boyce & Roger Swift (eds.), *Problems and Perspectives in Irish History since 1800*, (Dublin 2004)
Norman, E.R., *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England*, (London 1968)
Norman, Edward, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century*, (Oxford 1984)
O'Day, Alan, *The English Face of Irish Nationalism*, (Dublin 1977)

O'Day, Alan, The political organization of the Irish in Britain, 1867-90, in Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989)
O'Day, Alan, (ed.), *A Survey of the Irish in England 1872*, (London 1990)
O'Day, Alan, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour in Britain, 1846-1922, in Panikos Panayi (ed.), *Racial Violence in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (London 1996)
O'Day, Alan, A Conundrum of Irish Diasporic Identity: Mutative Ethnicity, in Roger Swift and Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *Irish Identities in Victorian Britain*, (Abingdon 2011)
O'Leary, Paul, *Immigration and Integration, The Irish in Wales 1798-1922*, (Cardiff 2000)
Ó Tuathaigh, Gearoid, *Ireland Before the Famine 1798–1848*, (Dublin 2007)
Ó Tuathaigh, M.A.G., The Irish in nineteenth century Britain: problems of integration, in S. Gilley and R. Swift (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City*, (London 1985)
Panikos Panayi, *An Immigration History of Britain, Multicultural Racism since 1800*, (Abingdon, Oxon 2014)
Parsons, Gerald, *Religion in Victorian Britain: Traditions*, (Manchester 1988)
Paterson, Michael, *Life in Victorian Britain*, (London 2008)
Paz, Denis G., *Popular Anti-Catholicism in Mid-Victorian England*, (Stanford 1992)
Pelling, Henry, *Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain*, (London 1968)
Petrie, Charles, *The Victorians*, (London 1960)
Poole, Benjamin, *The History of Coventry*, (Coventry 1852)
Pooley, Colin G., Segregation or integration? The residential experience of the Irish in mid-Victorian Britain, in Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989)
Powell, Henry Townsend, *Roman Fallacies and Catholic Truths*, (London 1841)
Powell, Henry Townsend, *The Short Catechism of Roman Idolatry*, (London 1842)
Powell, Henry Townsend, *The Merchandise of Souls: or the Money Method of Salvation in the Church of Rome*, (London 1845)
Powell, Henry Townsend, *Vicars Appeal to his Roman Catholic Parishioners in reply to Mr. Wilberforce's Farewell Letter*, (Coventry 1851)
Prest, John, *The Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, (London 1960)
Priestley, J.B., *English Journey*, (London 1934)
Raphael, Samuel, Comers and Goers, in H.J. Dyos & Michael Wolff (eds.), *The Victorian city: Images and Realities*, (London 1976)
Raymond, Stuart A., *The Census 1801-1911, A Guide for the Internet era*, (Bury 2009)
Redford, Arthur, *Labour Migration in England 1800-1850*, (Manchester 1964)
Roberts, Robert, *The Classic Slum*, (Manchester 1971)
Richardson, Kenneth, *Coventry: Past into Present*, (Chichester 1987)
Samuel, Raphael, The Roman Catholic Church and the Irish Poor, in S. Gilley and R. Swift (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City*, (London 1985)
Samuel, Raphael, An Irish Religion, in Raphael Samuel (ed.), *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity, Minorities and Outsiders* Vol. 2, (London 1989)
Short, John E., *The John Gulson Story*, (Coventry 1978)
Simpson, Dom Sebastian, A Centenary Memorial of Saint Osburg's Coventry 1845-1945, (2007) http://coventry-catholicdeanery.org.uk/new/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/history-sep-07.pdf
Skinner, Joan, Dunlop in Birmingham: the making of an Industrial Empire, in Barbara Tilson (ed.), *Made in Birmingham: Design & Industry, 1889-1989*, (Studley 1990) pp. 211-221
Smith, Adrian, *City of Coventry: A twentieth Century Icon*, (London 2006)

Smith, Anthony D., *National Identity*, (London 1991)
Spiers, Edward M., *The Late Victorian Army, 1868-1902*, (Manchester 1992)
Suarez-Orozco, Carola and Marcelo, *Children of Immigration*, (Harvard 2001)
Sutherland, Philomena, Sectarianism and Evangelicalism in Birmingham and Liverpool, 1850-2010, in J Wolffe (ed.), *Protestant-Catholic Conflict from the Reformation to the 21st Century: The Dynamics of Religious Difference*, (Basingstoke 2013)
Swift, Roger & Gilley, Sheridan, (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City*, (London 1985)
Swift, Roger & Gilley, Sheridan, (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989)
Swift, Roger & Gilley, Sheridan, (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain*, (London 1999)
Swift, Roger & Gilley, Sheridan, Introduction: Irish identities in Victorian Britain, in Roger Swift and Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *Irish Identities in Victorian Britain*, (Abingdon 2011)
Swift, Roger, Identifying the Irish in Victorian Britain: Recent Trends in Historiography, in Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *Irish Identities in Victorian Britain*, (Abingdon 2011)
Swift, Roger, (ed.) *Irish Migrants in Britain 1815-1914*, (Cork 2002)
Swift, Roger, 'Another Stafford Street Row': Law, Order and the Irish Presence in mid-Victorian Wolverhampton." in Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City*, (London 1985)
Swift, Roger, *Crime and society in Wolverhampton, 1815-1860*, (Wolverhampton 1987) .
Swift, Roger, Crime and the Irish in nineteenth-century Britain, in Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*, (London 1989)
Swift, Roger, The historiography of the Irish in nineteenth-century Britain, in Patrick O'Sullivan (ed.), *The Irish in the New Communities*, (London 1992)
Swift, Roger, Thomas Carlyle and Ireland, in D. George Boyce & Roger Swift (eds.), *Problems and perspectives in Irish History since 1800*, (Dublin 2004)
Swift, Roger, Behaving Badly? Irish Migrants and Crime in the Victorian City, in Judith Rowbotham and Kim Stevenson (eds.), *Criminal Conversations: Victorian Crimes, Social Panic and Moral Outrage*, (Columbus 2005)
Thompson, E.P., *Industry and Empire*, (London 1968)
Thompson, E.P., *The Making of the English Working Class*, (London 1968)
Thomson, David, *England in the Nineteenth Century*, (London 1950)
Upton, Chris, *A History of Wolverhampton*, (Stroud 1998)
Ullathorne, William, *Notes on the Education Question*, (London 1857)
Ullathorne, William Bernard, *From cabin-boy to archbishop, the autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne; printed from the original draft; with an introduction by Shane Leslie*, (New York 1941)
Walters, Peter, *The Story of Coventry*, (Brimscombe, Stroud 2013)
Weinberger, Barbara, The Police and Public in Mid-nineteenth-century Warwickshire, in Victor Bailey (ed.), *Policing and Punishment in Nineteenth Century Britain*, (Abingdon 1981)
Weinberger, Barbara, Urban and rural crime rates and their genesis in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Britain, in Eric Arthur Johnson & Eric H. Monkkonen (eds.), *The Civilization of Crime: Violence in Town and Country Since the Middle Ages*, (Illinois 1996)
Wilson, A.N., *The Victorians*, (London 2002)

Wilson, William Julius, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass and Public Policy*, (Chicago 1987)
Winder, Robert, *Bloody Foreigners*, (London 2004)
Wolffe, John, *The Protestant Crusade in Great Britain 1829-1860*, (Oxford 1991)
Wood, Anthony, *Nineteenth Century Britain 1815-1914*, (London 1960)
Woodham-Smith, Cecil, *The Great Hunger*, (London 1962)
Woolley Ian, *A Victorian Resting Place - Coventry's London Road Cemetery*, (Coventry 2015)
Yates, John A., *Pioneers to Power*, (Coventry 1950)

Articles

Alcock, N.W., Housing the Urban Poor in 1800: Courts in Atherstone and Coventry, Warwickshire, *Vernacular Architecture,* Vol. 36, (2005) pp. 49-60.
Arnstein, Walter L., The Murphy riots: A Victorian Dilemna, *Victorian Studies*, 19, Issue 1 (1975) pp. 51-71
Beaven, Brad & Griffiths, John, Urban Elites, Socialists and Notions of Citizenship in an Industrial Boomtown: Coventry, c.1870-1914, *Labour History Review*, Vol. 69, No. 1, (April 2004) p. 6
Binckes, Faith & Laing, Kathryn, Irish Autobiographical Fiction and Hannah Lynch's Autobiography of a Child, *English Literature in Transition*, *1880-1920*, Vol. 55, No 2, (2012) pp. 195-218
Borrill, Rachel, Reporting on the publication of 'Discrimination and the Irish community in Britain', by the Commission of Racial Equality, *Irish Times* 26th June 1997.
Breathnach, Kathleen, The last of the Dublin silk weavers, *Irish Arts Review*, (1990) pp. 134-143
Busteed, M.A. and Hodgson, R.I., Irish Migrant Responses to Urban Life in Early Nineteenth-Century Manchester, *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 162, No. 2 (Jul., 1996) pp. 141-145
Carlson, Holly K. and McHenry, Monica A., Effect of accent and dialect on employability, *Journal of Employment Counseling* Vol. 43 June 2006 pp. 70-83
Casey, Patricia, Religious practice offers a happy alternative to young, *Irish Independent* 9th February 2019 p. 30
Champ, Judith F., Priesthood and Politics in the Nineteenth Century: The Turbulent Career of Thomas McDonnell, *Recusant History*, Vol. 18, (1987) pp. 289-303
Coolahan, John, The Daring First Decade of the Board of National Education, *The Irish Journal of Education*, Vol. 17, No 1, (1983) pp. 35-54
Davis, Patsy, Birmingham's Irish community and the Murphy Riots of 1867, *Midland History*, Vol. 31, 1, (2006) pp. 37-66
Dillon, T., The Irish in Leeds 1851-1861, *Thoresby Society Publications Miscellany*, 16, (1974) pp. 1-28
'Painter', Review of Henry Townsend Powell's Roman Fallacies and Catholic Truths, *The Episcopal Magazine, and Church of England Warder*, No XXIII, November (London 1840) pp. 605-609
Fitzpatrick, David, Review: The Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire by W.J. Lowe, *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 109, No. 430 (Feb. 1994) pp. 221- 222
Goodhart, David, More immigration means less integration, *Standpoint* Issue 77 November 2015 pp. 30-33
Hennessy, Mark, A report on the new generation of homeless emigrants arriving at the London Irish Centre's door in Camden. *Irish Times*, 28th December 2013
King, Russell, Shuttleworth, John, and Strachan, Alan, The Irish in Coventry: the Social Geography of a Relict Community, *Irish Geography*, Vol. 22, Issue 2, (1989)

pp. 64-78
Kynaston, David, Modernity Britain: A Shake of the Dice, 1959-62, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 14th September 2014
Haynes, Barry, Working–Class Respectability in Leicester c. 1845-80, *Transactions Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*, Vol. 65, (1991) pp. 55-67
Johnson, J.H., Harvest Migration from Nineteenth-Century Ireland, *Transaction of the Institute of British Geographers*, No. 41 (June 1967) pp. 97-112
Lobban, R.D., The Irish community in Greenock in the nineteenth century, *Irish Geography*, 6, No 3 (1971) pp. 270-281
MacRaild, D.M., Review of Steven Fielding, Class and Ethnicity: Irish Catholics in England, 1880-1939, *Labour History Review*, Vol. 58, No. 2, Autumn 1993 pp. 44-48
MacRaild, Donald M., Irish Immigration and the 'Condition of England' Question: The Roots of an Historiographical Tradition, *Immigrants and Minorities* Vol. 15, No 1, March 1995 p. 70
MacRaild, Donald, Transnationalising 'Anti-Popery': Militant Protestant Preachers in the Nineteenth-Century Anglo-World, *Journal of Religious History* Vol. 39, No. 2 June 2015 pp. 224 -243
Moore, H.E. (Re), *Downside Review*, Vol. 18, (1899) pp. 178-179
Morgan, Craig, Migration, Ethnicity, and Psychosis: Towards a Sociodevelopmental Model, *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, 36(4), July 2010 pp. 655-664 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2894585/
Mulkern, Paul, Irish Immigrants and Public Disorder in Coventry 1845-1875, *Midland History*, 21 (1996) pp. 119-135
Murphy, Patrick, Irish settlement in Nottingham in the early nineteenth century, *Transactions of the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire*, Vol. XCVIII, 1994 pp. 82-91
O Grada, Cormac, Seasonal Migration and Post-Famine Adjustment in the West of Ireland, *Studia Hibernica*, No 13 (1973) pp. 48-76
O'Neill, Ciaran, Review of Divergent Paths, by John Herson, *The Economic History Review* Vol. 69, 2 May 2016 pp. 718-719
Ó Tuathaigh, M. A. G., The Irish in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Problems of Integration, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Fifth Series*, Vol. 31, (1981) pp. 149-173
Paz, G.D., Anti-Catholicism, Anti-Irish Stereotyping and Anti-Celtic Racism in Mid-Victorian Working Class Periodicals, *Albion*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Winter 1986) pp. 601-616
Pereira Ambrose (Re), Silver Jubilee of Fathers Isidore Green and Ambrose Pereira, *Downside Review*, Vol. 1, (July 1882) pp. 455-458
Pooley, Colin G., The Residential Segregation of Migrant communities in Mid-Victorian Liverpool, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, Vol. 2, No. 3, (1977) pp. 364-382
Ravenstein, E.G., The Laws of Migration, *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (Jun., 1885) pp. 167-235
Richardson, C., Irish settlement in mid-nineteenth century Bradford, *Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research*, 20 (1968) pp. 40-57
Richardson, C., The Irish in Victorian Bradford, *The Bradford Antiquary*, 45 (1976) pp. 294-316
Searby, Peter, The Relief of the Poor in Coventry, 1830-1863, *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (Jun., 1977) pp. 345-361
Searby, Peter, Paternalism, Disturbance and Parliamentary Reform: Society and Politics in Coventry, 1819–32, *International Review of Social History*, Vol. 22 Issue 2 (August 1977) pp. 215-216
Searby, Peter, Chartists and Freemen in Coventry, 1838-1860, *Social History*, Vol. 2, No. 6 (Oct., 1977) pp. 761-784

Sheldon, Nicola, Families in the firing line: prosecutions for truancy in Coventry, 1874-1899, *Local Population Studies*, No 83 (Autumn 2009) pp. 21-38
Simmons, Jack, A Victorian Social Worker: Joseph Dare and the Leicester Domestic Mission, *Transactions Leicestershire Archaeological and History Society*, Vol. 46, (1970-71) pp. 65-80
Smith, Thomas Cuthbert (Re), *Downside Review*, Vol. 3. 1, (1884) pp. 209-211
Swift, Roger, The Outcast Irish in the British Victorian City: Problems and Perspectives, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 99 (May, 1987) pp. 264-276
Swift, Roger, Review of Steven Fielding, Class and Ethnicity: Irish Catholics in England, 1880-1939, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 28. No. 111 (May, 1993) pp. 331-333
Williams, F.J., Irish in the East Cheshire silk industry*, 1851 -186*, *Journal of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, Vol. 136 (1987) pp. 99-126

Theses

Champ, Judith F., Assimilation and Separation: The Catholic Revival in Birmingham C1650-1850, Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham 1984
Danaher, Nessan John Eugene, The Irish in Leicester, c. 1841 to c. 1891: A study of a Minority Community in the East Midlands, Doctoral Thesis, University of North London (1999) https://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.302442
Davis, Patsy, Green Ribbons: The Irish in Birmingham in the 1860s A Study of Housing, Work and Policing, Master of Philosophy Thesis, University of Birmingham (2003) http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/3602/
Merrell, Catherine Berenice, The Late Victorian Roman Catholic Periodical Press and Attitudes to the 'Problem of the Poor', Unpublished PhD Thesis, De Montfort University (2001) http://hdl.handle.net/2086/4782
Moriarty, Esther Maria, The Great Famine - an Irish tragedy and its impact on the English town of Huddersfield from 1845-1861, Doctoral Thesis, University of Huddersfield (2010) http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/8802
Peach, Alexander, Poverty, Religion and Prejudice in Nineteenth Century Britain: The Catholic Irish in Birmingham 1800-c1880, Unpublished PhD Thesis, De Montfort University (2000) https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/2749353.pdf
Scott, Caroline L, A comparative re-examination of Anglo-Irish relations in nineteenth-century Manchester, Liverpool and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Doctoral Thesis, Durham University (1998) http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/1058/
Searby, P., Weavers and Freemen in Coventry, 1820-61: Social and Political Traditionalism in an early Victorian Town, Doctoral Thesis, University of Warwick (1972) http://go.warwick.ac.uk/wrap/3472
Weinberger, Barbara, Law Breakers and Law Enforcers in the late Victorian City 1867-1877, Doctoral Thesis, University of Warwick (1981)
Ziesler, Kaja Irene, The Irish in Birmingham 1830-1970, Doctoral Thesis, University of Birmingham (1989) https://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.493398

Websites

Dates accessed provided in narrative.
A Web of English History, The Moral and Physical Condition of the Working Classes of Manchester in 1832, http://www.historyhome.co.uk/peel/p-health/mterkay.htm
Anphoblacht, Davis, Patsy, Remembering the Past: Fenian commemoration in Birmingham in *Anphoblacht*, http://www.anphoblacht.com/contents/6901
BBC, Tracing the hidden River Sherbourne under Coventry, http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-coventry-warwickshire-30446327
British Film Institute, Lady Godiva Procession in Coventry (1902),

https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-lady-godiva-procession-in-coventry-1902-1902-online
British History Online, The City of Coventry: Introduction', in W.B. Stephens (ed.), *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (London 1969) pp. 1-23, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16005
British History Online, 'The City of Coventry: The outlying parts of Coventry, Asthill, Horwell, and Whoberley', in W.B. Stephens (ed.), *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8, the City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (London 1969) pp. 48-50, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/warks/vol8/pp48-50
British History Online, 'The City of Coventry: Buildings: Domestic buildings', in W.B. Stephens (ed.), *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (1969) pp. 146-150, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16023
British History Online, 'The City of Coventry: Crafts and industries, Modern industry and trade,' in W. B. Stephens (ed.), *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8, the City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (London 1969) pp. 162-189, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/warks/vol8/
British History Online, 'The City of Coventry: Social history from 1700', in W.B. Stephens (ed.), *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (London 1969) pp. 222-241, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16030
British History Online, 'The City of Coventry: Parliamentary representation', in W.B. Stephens (ed.), *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (London 1969) pp. 248-255, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16032
British History Online, 'The City of Coventry: Local government and public services: Public services', in W.B. Stephens (ed.), *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick* (London 1969), pp. 275-298. http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16035
British History Online, 'The City of Coventry: Roman Catholicism', in W.B. Stephens (ed.), *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (London 1969) pp. 368-371, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16030
Coventry Society, Spotlight on the Ring Road, http://www.coventrysociety.org.uk/news/article/spotlight-on-the-ring-road.html
Historic Coventry, Copsewood Grange, http://forum.historiccoventry.co.uk/main/forum-posts.php?id=465
Historic Coventry, Vicars of St. Michael's, https://www.historiccoventry.co.uk/history/st_michaels_vicars.php
Pew Research Center, Differences between Latino generations, www.pewhispanic.org/2004/03/19/generational-differences/
Manchester's Radical History, Stockport Riot, June 1852, https://radicalmanchester.wordpress.com/2010/04/08/stockport-riot-june-1852/
Medscape, Yang, Zhongshu. Alcohol-Related Psychosis. https://emedicine.medscape.com/article/289848-overview
National Archives of Ireland, Johnston, Nigel, *Historical commentary for 1822*, http://www.csorp.nationalarchives.ie/context/Historical%20Commentaries%20for%201822%20-%20with%20hyperlinks.pdf
Online Historical Population Reports, Higgs, Edward, The Religious Census of 1851. http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/View?path=Browse/Essays%20(by%20kind)/General&active=yes&mno=2062

Real Ale Rambles, Public House History, http://www.realalerambles.co.uk/history/W/waggon_and_horses_well.html
Reviews in History, Peach, Alexander, 'Review of *The Irish in Victorian Britain: the Local Dimension*, (review no. 128)' http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/128
SS Mary and Benedict Roman Catholic Church, Coventry, Parish History, http://www.ssmaryandbenedict.org.uk/parish-history.html
Taking Stock, Catholic Churches of England & Wales, http://taking-stock.org.uk/Home/Dioceses/Archdiocese-of-Birmingham/Coventry-St-Mary-and-St-Benedict
The National Archives, Migration Histories, http://www.movinghere.org.uk/galleries/histories/irish/settling/racism_prejudice_1.htm#
The National Archives, Records, http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/results/r?_ps=60&_p=1800&_q=coventry+Irish
The Rex Sinnott Site, Genealogy of the Sinnott family, https://www.sinnottnz.com/getperson.php?personID=I2437&tree=tree5
The Workhouse, Coventry Workhouse, http://www.workhouses.org.uk/Coventry/
University of Warwick, The London Irish in the Long Eighteenth Century (1680-1830), http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/events/londonirish
Victorian Occupation Index, Wilkinson, Amanda, Hawkers, http://victorianoccupations.co.uk/h/h-is-for-hawker/
WWW.Oldbike.Eu., Online vintage bicycle museum, https://oldbike.wordpress.com/7-bicycles-manufactured-in-coventry/
Wikipedia, Godiva Procession, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Godiva_Procession
The 1851 Religious and Educational Censuses, Introduction, Coakley, Frances, (1998), http://www.isle-of-man.com/manxnotebook/methdism/rc1851/rcu1851.htm

THE IRISH IN NINETEENTH CENTURY COVENTRY

Two Volumes

Volume 2

Thomas Joseph Prendergast

A thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
Ulster University
in fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

School of Arts & Humanities

April 2019

Appendix 1

Families in Much Park Street in 1841

Andrew Furlong

The story of the Furlong household reveals proletarian poverty, tragedy and movement away from Coventry. In the census of 1841 Andrew Furlong, weaver, and his wife Alice (nee Saunders, b. 1813) were Irish-born and had reared over the last eight years their four local-born children (Richard, Esther, Andrew and Alice) and like the Sanders (below) in Much Park Street would move to Brick Kiln Lane by 1851.[1] In 1851 two more children, Charles and Harriett could be noted, and in 1853 Frederick was born. Andrew and Alice were married in the Anglican, St. Michael's church, by the vicar Robert Simpson on 6th September 1831- as legal marriages could only be enacted in a Catholic Church from 1836. Their first child Richard, on 21st October 1832, and subsequent children were baptised in the Catholic Chapel on Hill Street. Andrew moved with his family to Colne in Lancashire where they were recorded in 1861 all working as cotton power-loom weavers. Andrew was a twister in cotton in Bury Lancashire in 1871 with Alice, Charles, Harriet and Frederick. There he died in 1875. His move to Lancashire was dictated by the collapse of 1860 and shows how finding work was a crucial determinant of location. Alice, in 1881, was living with Charles & Frederick in Bury. Fortunately, after mentioning her birthplace simply as Ireland over five consecutive censuses, before she died in 1899 she revealed in the 1891 census that she was from Dublin. Unfortunately, in 1876 Richard died at 44 years in Warwickshire Lunatic Asylum while Andrew junior was described as a hawker in Manchester in 1881.[2]

Joseph Sanders an Irish-born weaver lived with his local-born wife and nine children since his eldest was born locally fourteen years earlier. They were to move, like the Furlongs, to newer houses nearby in Brick Kiln Lane by 1851.

Benjamin Aden a local-born was living with Elizabeth (nee Furlong) born in Ireland, both weavers, and their local born three year old son Mark. They moved to nearby Brick Kiln Lane in 1851 where Elizabeth was to be described as Coventry-born. In 1861 she would re-appear as an Irish-born silk weaver but was now living with Benjamin and

[1] Initially it was assumed that the surname reference of Catherine Saunders who was married to a Joseph Sanders provided evidence of a kinship link between Joseph and Alice Furlong (nee Saunders) and strengthened the reason for their nearby location in Much Park Street. However there were in fact two separate Joseph Sanders families, with one, that of Joseph Locton Sanders (birthplace: Dublin, 1861 census) and his wife Martha living in the vicinity of the Furlongs in 1841 and deflecting the fact that the other, Joseph and Catherine Sanders family who had a link through Catherine being a baptismal sponsor for the eldest Furlong child, had left for Birmingham by 1841. At its simplest there was Andrew, Jane and Elizabeth Sarah, Lydia and Charles Furlong. Jane married Dave Bradbury and Elizabeth Sarah married Benjamin Aden. Jane and Dave were witnesses at Andrew's marriage to Alice. Jane was also a witness at her sister's marriage to Benjamin Aden who were mentioned in the Introduction as living on the same street as the Furlongs. However while Andrew was constantly referred to as Irish-born down through the censuses, Jane never was, while Elizabeth Sarah was intermittently and Charles not at all. Lydia was born in Dublin and on 12th February 1826 she married William Cleaver a Coventry silk weaver. Their parental background and relationship to each other cannot be confirmed nor can Jane's exclusively British background be properly explained. This all serves to indicate that it is only through minute exploration that the bonds between families become apparent.

[2] Warwickshire, England, Marriages and Banns, 1754-1910; England, Select Marriages, 1538-1973; RG9/3080.73.10 ED 28; RG10/3959.86.25 ED 3; RG12/3138.16.26 ED

Mark, described as cotton power loom weavers, in Colne Lancashire having moved in response to locally advertised vacancies for weavers in Lancashire.[3]
Joseph and Theresa Smith were both born in Ireland just as the century itself began. They were weavers who married in Coventry in 1822 wherein their five sons were born.[4] They were to move, only with their youngest William, to adjoining St. John Street by 1851, where Teresa was to be found a widowed charwoman on her own by 1861 and would herself pass away in April 1868. The background of the five sons, born locally with a quintessential English name, would it is suggested, not remain obvious over the longer term. However there is some indication of their outlook because Joseph their second son was to be found in 1861 as a furniture broker at the back of 106 Gosford Street and was married to Ann born in Dublin.

James McGowran, a weaver and Ann a winder were rearing two local-born children called William and Prudence. Ann's Irish born mother was named Prudence Broughila; the families of Irish-born weaver David Broughill in Swanswell Terrace, Irish-born weaver William Broughall in close-by Fleet Street, and hand loom weaver Edward Braughill in Jordan Well were most likely those of her brothers. In 1851 the family and mother-in-law Prudence had moved to nearby Freeth Street where they were still found in 1861. His son William became a Liberal councillor, was recorded as a 72 year old widower in 1911 and was the licensee of the Star & Garter at 39 Albert Street. Further details on William and others in the McGowran family are recorded in Appendix 2.

William Ludford was enumerated in 1841 as an Irish-born weaver. He had lived in Coventry with his local-born wife Ann and seven children since the birth of their eldest sixteen years earlier. However William was described as born in Coventry in 1851 and subsequently. Since he was clearly recorded as Irish-born in 1841 he was retained as head of an *Irish Household* for 1841. It was very unusual for a Conventrian to be referred to in error as Irish-born by an enumerator (much more likely the reverse) so he was regarded as Irish for that census in this study. His youngest child in 1841 was 12 month old Henry. He had become a widower by 1861 and was then found residing with his married daughter Catherine Major. A half century later Henry lived in H12C13 St. John Street (Figure 3.7) and was a 'labouring - grave digger', reminding that not everyone achieved advancement in Coventry.[5]

John Byrne was an Irish-born builder; his wife Elizabeth was from Burnley. In 1851 they had moved to Princethorpe where he, now 70 years, described himself as a mason.

A widow ***Mary Hands*** a winder born in Dublin resided in Coventry with her four local-born children for over twenty years, since the eldest Mary was born there twenty years previously. By 1851 she would be living as a pauper in St. Johns Street with her daughter Mary and son-in-law labourer Henry Berry and by 1861 she would be living at 2 Back of 67 Much Park Street supported by her son.

Not only were Irish-born men married to local women but the reverse also occurred. Irish-born ***Hannah Everton*** had lived with her local-born weaving husband and four children in Coventry for at least seven years. She was not found subsequently.

---

[3] HO/107.2067.184.13 ED 9

[4] The 1841 census only informs to the point of whether or not born a person was born in Warwickshire. It is assumed that in most cases where Warwickshire was indicated by 'Yes' that Coventry was implied, and it, or the word local are here used.

[5] HO/107.1152.7.7 Book 6 ED 12; HO/107.2067.254.27; ED 12

Margaret Young from Ireland, with her local-born husband John who was an agricultural labourer, over the previous six years had reared three local-born children and was to move to St. John Street in 1851 where she was described as Coventry-born. They were still in St. John Street in 1861 where she was described as a Coventry-born midwife.

Margerite M Cormick and her four children, the youngest James ten years of age were all Irish-born. She was a warper, her eldest son a weaver and her two daughters fillers. She was in Much Park Street in 1851 but a daughter and son had moved. She was still residing in the street in H9C23 in 1861 with James now 30 years.[6]

Table A.1.1 Irish-born Males involved in Weaving in Coventry 1841. Those in italics were also recorded in 1851.

		Age	Occupation
Bambrick	*William*	*40*	*Silk Weaver*
Barry	*John*	*25*	*Ribbon weaver*
Boylan	John	30	Weaver
Branin	Timothy	67	Ribbon weaver
Branin	Timothy	25	Ribbon weaver
Braughall	Edward	36	Ribbon weaver
Brazell	James	40	Weaver
Brooks	*John*	*40*	*Ribbon weaver*
Brooks	*Richard*	*20*	
Broughall	William	45	Weaver
Broughill	*David*	*40*	*Ribbon Weaver*
Brownlow	*Robert*	*45*	*Rib weaver*
Cary	*Michael*	*60*	*Weaver*
Colgan	William	42	Weaver
Comerford	*John*	*20*	*Winder*
Connolly	James	30	Weaver
Cormick	Joseph	22	Weaver
Doran	Patrick	65	Weaver
Doran	*Thomas*	*30*	*Weaver*
Doran	*Patrick*	*20*	*Weaver*
Doran	Fran	30	Ribbon weaver
Dwyer	*John*	*40*	*Ribbon weaver*
Egan	*John*	*60*	*Weaver*
Elston	*Joseph*	*40*	*Weaver*
Elstone	*Thomas*	*25*	*Weaver*
Farrel	Michael	20	Weaver
Fawcett	Joseph	60	Weaver
Fitzgerald	*Richard*	*41*	*R weaver j*
Fitzgerald	James	49	Ribbon Weaver
Fitzpatrick	*Andrew*	*45*	*Rib weaver*
Fleetwood	Henry	30	Silk throwster
Fleetwood	Richard	25	Ribbon weaver
Flood	James	21	Weaver
Furlong	*Andrew*	*30*	*Weaver*
Griffin	John	25	Weaver
Hare	Michael	40	Weaver
Harris	*Thomas*	*30*	*Ribbon weaver*
Harris	George	40	Weaver

[6] HO107/1152.32.17 Book 3 ED 6

Table A.1.1 Continued Irish-born Males involved in Weaving in Coventry 1841. Those in italics were also recorded in 1851			
Hayward	Thomas	57	Weaver
Hewson	*Peter*	*33*	*Weaver*
Hewson	*William*	*25*	*R weaver*
Hewson	John	42	Weaver
Holden	*Christopher*	*45*	*Weaver*
Hyland	William	50	Weaver j
Keaney	*Robert*	*35*	*Weaver*
Kelley	*Thomas*	*40*	*Weaver*
Kelley	*Patrick*	*35*	*Weaver*
Kelly	*Patrick*	*35*	*Weaver*
Kelly	Henry	30	Ribbon weaver
Kenardy	*Michael*	*45*	*Ribbon weaver*
Kelly	Henry	30	Ribbon weaver
Kenardy	*Michael*	*45*	*Ribbon weaver*
Lawless	*William*	*35*	*Weaver*
Leonard	John	40	Ribbon weaver
Ludford	William	35	Weaver
Mc'aile	*Thomas*	*30*	*Weaver*
McCarthy	James	30	Ribbon weaver
McGowran	*James*	*35*	*Ribbon weaver*
McLean	*Thomas*	*40*	*Silk weaver*
McMan	*Francis*	*35*	*Winder*
MLeane	James	60	Ribbon weaver
Oberin	William	25	R weaver
Oliphant	William	25	Ribbon weaver j
Phillips	*Henry*	*35*	*Weaver*
Phillips	*Benjamin*	*40*	*Ribbon weaver*
Phillips	*John*	*38*	*Silk weaver*
Powell	*Patrick*	*40*	*Ribbon weaver*
Reaney	*Joseph*	*45*	*Weaver*
Sanders	*Joseph*	*35*	*Weaver*
Saunders	Robert	30	Ribbon weaver
Saunders	Joseph	35	Weaver
Smart	*Thomas*	*35*	*Weaver*
Smith	*Joseph*	*35*	*Weaver*
Turner	*Luke*	*45*	*Weaver*
Turner	*Edward*	*15*	*Weaver*
White	Edward	40	Weaver
Wikes	William	35	Weaver
Total 76. Italicised 35. Richard Brooks was referred to as a Hand Loom Weaver in 1851 Source: ADB			

Appendix 2

Persons of Interest

Samuel Dunlop Adams (1856-1898)

He was an Irish-born unmarried draper's assistant in Stoke-on-Trent in 1881. There he met and married his Coventry-born wife Agnes Kimberley in 1882 which explains his arrival in Coventry.[1] He was landlord between 1890 and 1896 of the White Lion, Gosford Terrace.[2] He died 11th May 1898 aged 43.[3]

(1) RG11/2717.72.27 ED 3; England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915 Staffordshire 6b p. 317
(2) RG12/2455.76.37 ED 19
(3) England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915 Warwickshire 6d p. 297

Dennis George Barnes (1803-1879)

Dennis George Barnes was born in Athlone on 13th February 1803 and was baptised on 15th July 1810 in Bridlington, York. His father was Dennis Barnes a Dubliner who joined the army in 1785, had served in the West Indies and settled in Berkswell near Coventry. His father was Quartermaster of her Majesty's First Royals. Dennis was a furniture broker in Smithford Street in 1841 and a prominent auctioneer. He was a member of the Trinity Lodge of the Freemasons from 1843 until 1847. Barnes was elected as Conservative councillor for Gosford Street Ward in the 1860s and was an elected member of the Coventry Education board during the 1870s. He died 28th August 1879 leaving a personal estate under £4,000.

At an anniversary dinner held in November 1871 of the 1st Troop of the Yeomanry Cavalry a presentation was made to Barnes of a silver cup to mark his resignation as their drill sergeant-major after thirty five years. Later in the evening after receiving their token of esteem he stated 'his life had been somewhat chequered. Born in the army; of Irish extraction; religion a Protestant; in politics a Conservative of the Conservatives; born in 1803; a soldier when the Battle of Waterloo was fought; a member of their troop at the Crimea…'

England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975 FHL 919162
RG10/3175.142.5 ED 11
Coventry Standard 10th October 1845, 2nd February 1855
HO107/2071.292.18 ED 2a
England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1879 p. 305
United Grand Lodge of England Freemason Membership Registers, 1751-1921
Coventry Standard 2nd December 1870, 1st December 1871

Zephaniah Binley (1819-1901)

Zephaniah Augustus Binley was son of Joseph Binley (1788-1834) from Monks Kirby, Warwickshire, who served as Quartermaster of her Majesty's First Royals. Zephaniah was born on 5th May 1819 in Dublin. He lived in Fleet Street, Coventry in 1845. He was on the Local Health Board in 1852. His first wife Anne Hollick died in 1865 aged 42. In July 1867 he married Margaret Rae. He lived in the countryside in Caludon, then in Willenhall where in 1881 he was described as a 'Farmer of 185 Acres employing 4 men and 1 boy'. He returned to urban Coventry after 1891 to reside at 125 Gosford Street. He then resided at Stoke Park where he died circa 26th August 1901 aged 82. He lived outside the study area for the censuses of 1881 and 1891 but returned inside it in time for the census of 1901.

From the *Midland Daily Telegraph* 24th August 1901: 'The death has occurred at his residence…of Mr Zephaniah Augustus Binley, who was in former years a prominent figure in the public life of the city. He was for the greater part of his business career associated with the brewing and building industries, having worked in connection with

Alderman Marriott (See Mark Fenton below) in many well-known undertakings…He took an active part in poor law administration, and was elected a Director of the Poor in 1858. He was returned for two succeeding years and then retired. Mr Binley took up this form of work again in 1870 as a member of the Board of Guardians and sat until 1878. During the period he was elected chairman - in 1875...in other less public matters did a large amount of useful work…Deceased has been an invalid for the past 12 years.'
https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/45808519/person/6426211522/story Accessed 16th January 2019
*Coventry Sta*ndard 10th October 1845, 17th December 1852

Henry Norbert Birt (1861-1919)

Born in Valparaiso, Chile, he was educated at University College, London. He was clothed in Downside in 1880 and ordained in 1889. He was a chaplain in the Boer War. He resided in Coventry from 1892-1895 where he represented Catholics on the School Board from 1894. Part of his letter of address to those voting to elect the Board is published in Chapter 4. He moved to London to act as secretary to Cardinal Gasquet until 1914 and then served as an Army Chaplin to the Military Hospital, near Southampton for much of the period of the Great War. He died shortly after an operation which he underwent following a long illness. He authored studies on Benedictine history.
Flickr, https://www.flickr.com/photos/downsideabbeyarchives/albums/72157645761489100 Accessed 15th January 2019
Flickr, https://www.flickr.com/photos/downsideabbeyarchives/31010798256/ Accessed 15th January 2019

John Bracken (1810-1871+)

The *Coventry Standard* 14th August 1840 reported that John was drunk and acted like a madman in the police station. He provided the material for the *Coventry Herald* 25th April 1845 to write in an amused fashion with their italics: 'John Bracken, a pugnacious little Emeralder, and inhabitant of the rag-fair region of Grey Friars' lane appeared…to answer the charge of having been drunk and guilty of a breach of the peace…PC Deeming stated that having been called to quell a tremendous row, on entering Bracken's dwelling, he found the small "lord of the castle" lying on the floor [pinned down] by a man restraining the violence of the little rag-merchant…No sooner was the excited Bracken permitted to rise from the floor, than he commenced bouncing about most outrageously, threatening to go and feed the pigs, and to thrash a very affectionate wife, who had secreted herself upstairs, and for which purpose the infuriated keeper of the rag-store was ascending…when Deeming placed his official hand upon his shoulder and took him away. Before the Magistrates…Bracken turned out to be a *plate-headed man*; and as excess of liquor is always supposed to fly to the weakest part, it flew to the plate in Mr Bracken's head, and developed itself in that terrible state of fermentation…' Deeming withdrew the charge and on Bracken's undertaking not to trouble the Magistrates again he was discharged, with a friend undertaking to get him home to bed 'with a view to cooling his metal'. The *Coventry Standard* of the same day added its own colour by telling how Bracken replied when asked by the magistrates what had he got to say for his conduct that Deeming outlined: 'Why it's all thrue that he's said as far as it goes, but he's not said it quite all, for when I've got a dhrop of drink, my wife is always throwing my country at me, and so I think it right to give her a topper [blow on the head] for it…' When asked to put 2s in the poor box he replied: 'Faith, but I've not got 2s., I cannot give the poor that which I have not myself.' As he did not appear quite sober the magistrates ordered that he be locked up in the outer room for some time but Bracken said 'No, not so fast Misther prosser, I'll not be locked up aint I honourably acquitted like a gintleman'. His promise not to trouble the magistrates was shortlived as he was before them in May pleading guilty to assaulting Charlotte Jeffs while

intoxicated. The *Coventry Herald* 16th May 1845 reported how the 'little Irishman with the unlucky plate in his head with all the grace of a true penitent, threw himself on the mercy of the Bench.' He was fined 5s. and 3s.6d. costs.

He married Arabella Jeffs in St. Michael's in November 1833.[1] The *Coventry Herald* 1st July 1842 reported that an inquest was held on the body of 4 year old John Bracken 'who had a day or two previously drank a quantity of oil of vitriol [sulphuric acid], which, after causing great agony to the little sufferer had terminated fatally'. Sarah Ann Bracken who was 2 weeks old died 13th March 1842.[2] Both the *Coventry Standard* and *Coventry Herald* of 16th January 1852 told that Bracken was found guilty of receiving stolen goods. His house was adjacent to the brewhouse of Mrs Fisher of the City Hotel, and liquor jars, belonging to her were found in his house. The jury found him guilty after two minutes of deliberation and he was imprisoned for 3 months.[3] His marriage was unhappy; in 1845 and 1859 he placed notices prominently in local newspapers stating he would not be responsible for the debts of his wife.[4] The *Coventry Herald* 26th November 1859 reported he was charged by Arabella for threatening her. There had been repeated disputes so they had separated, but Bracken was jealous of a man she had working for her, and on meeting her in street words ensued. Arabella was a forceful woman as she had been charged in 1853 by her niece of assaulting her by knocking her head against the wall.[5] Bracken was charged with being drunk and disorderly in Greyfriars Lane in 1860. He had got drunk and went to his separated wife's dwelling where he created a great disturbance.[6] In 1864 he was named as being in Greyfriar's lane with a number of other locals when a fight broke out that involved some visiting navvies, one of whom died and another was injured.[7] He was charged in 1866 with being drunk in Broadgate, and it was reported 'The old man being scarcely able to speak from illness, the bench gave him a severe reprimand'.[8]

The *Coventry Herald* 6th May 1870 reported that Arabella had died aged 51. Bracken was charged with striking PC Prime when he was requested to vacate the house of Jane Smith in Little Park Street which he had entered without her permission in 1871.[9]

(1) Select English Marriages 1538-1973 FHL 502204 Ref 1833, p48, cn 144
(2) Warwickshire Anglican Registers, Roll: Eng/2/1035; DRO 90
(3) England and Wales Criminal Registers, 1791-1892, Class HO27/102 p. 233 Year 1852
(4) *Coventry Standard* 9th May 1845; *Coventry Times* 12th October 1859
(5) *Coventry Herald* 14th January 1853
(6) *Coventry Standard* 27th April 1860
(7) Ibid. 18th November 1864, 2nd December 1864
(8) Ibid. 20th January 1866
(9) Ibid. 31st March 1871

<u>William A Bullen (1866-1935?)</u>

Born in Bandon, Co Cork.[1] In 1901 he was an unmarried Medical Practitioner at 31 White Street, Coventry.[2] He would appear to have been the ship's surgeon of the Orcoma in 1913.[3] It would appear he died 18th March 1935 in Forest Gate, Essex.[4]

(1) Civil Registration Births Index, 1864-1958 1866 Vol. 10 p. 131
(2) RG13/2912.152.7 ED 26
(3) Liverpool, England, Crew lists 1861-1919
(4) England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1835 p. 544

<u>Andrew St. Lawrance Burke (1869-1941)</u>

His father was Crown Solicitor and Clerk to the Crown for the county of Roscommon. He graduated from the Royal college of Surgeons and worked in Dublin, Roscommon and Kingstown. He moved to Britain and spent three years in Dudley Port, then six years in Bushbury, Wolverhampton. In July 1907 he took up a post in the Coventry Dispensary.[1] The principal reason for the move being the health of his Dudley-born wife Florence. This was a controversial appointment and he was ostracised by the

British Medical Association after taking it. See Denis McVeagh, this Appendix. In 1911 and until his death on 29th June 1941 he resided at Gosford House, 31 Walsgrave Road.[2] A High Court judgment was given in October 1918 in the King's Bench Division that found against the Medical Association; Burke and two other doctors were awarded substantial damages.[3] He was a member of the Conservative party but declined invitations to stand for the City Council. He was interested in sport, sailing, horse-riding, ski-ing and music. The *Coventry Herald* 5th February 1915 said of him: 'Cheery, genial, and like many Irishmen, naturally witty Dr Burke enjoys considerable popularity. Whatever social service he is able to offer the city he willingly offers. Since the commencement of the war his desire to help the country has been demonstrated in a number of ways…by gratuitously attending the wives and other dependents of soldiers, and by enrolling himself as a special constable. He is a practical patriot.' In 1939 a newspaper article titled 'Coventry Doctor's Witticisms' referred to the 'Sparkling Irish wit from Dr. A. St. Lawrance Burke [which] marked his report to the annual meeting of the Coventry Provident Dispensary….' From the list of six given, two short examples follow: 'Nature cures the disease, while the remedy amuses the patient…' and 'Doctors are always working to preserve health and cooks to destroy it, but the latter are more often successful…'[4]

(1) *Coventry Herald* 5th February 1915
(2) RG14/18563.78 ED 25; England & Wales National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1941 p. 710
(3) *Coventry Herald* 3rd August 1918; *Coventry Standard* 18th October 1918.
(4) *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 9th March 1939

James Leslie Callaghan (1860-1932)

There was no mention of this Dublin born physician and surgeon until his marriage in 1892 to Edith Browne in Axminster, Devonshire. He remained in Colyton, Devon until 1895.[1] In 1901 he resided at 10 Stonleigh Terrace Coventry and was a Conservative councillor. He did not seek re-election in October 1902 and by 1911 had moved to Barrow in Furness.[2] He died 4th February 1932 in Westminster, Middlesex.[3]

(1) England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index 1892 Vol. 5b p. 19
(2) RG13/2907.145.14 ED 17; *Coventry Herald* 31st October 1902; RG14/25679 ED29
(3) England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1966 (1932)

Thomas Anselm Cockshoot (1805-1872)

He was born in Liverpool in 1803 and was educated at Ampleforth where he took the Benedictine habit in 1822. From 1830-1838 he was in charge of the Catholic Mission in Coventry. He was Prior of St Lawrence's, Ampleforth from 1838-46. He was described as a man of buoyant temperament, who introduced in the College 'an excellence of tone and spirit' and created 'an atmosphere of enlarged views and ambitions, of cheerful self reliance and of eager industry'. He was remembered there as a 'worthy, holy and able man'. He was chaplain for twelve years at Holme-on-Spalding-Moor. In 1858 he moved to Hereford Priory and later to the nearby convent at Barestree.

Tablet 24th February 1872
Almond Cuthbert, *The History of Ampleforth Abbey*, (London 1903) pp. 339-342

John Brownrigge Collison (1809-1863)

Born in Ireland, he received a B.A. Degree from Trinity College, Dublin. He was recorded in Birmingham in 1841.[1] He arrived in Coventry in 1846.[2] It would appear that there was a determination even before he was selected that the rate for the Vicar which many saw as a burden to pay should be restricted.[3] Coupled with this was the fact that the Bishop had not complied with the earnest wishes of the parishioners to give the living to someone who they knew and respected but had appointed Collison who they

said was a stranger.[4] In these circumstances it was perhaps inevitable that Collison would become involved in a bitter public dispute over the size of the income he should receive, which the vestry judged to be £300 and he believed should be half of, or upwards towards £1,750.[5] He raised the continuing ire of prominent Coventrian, Abel Rotherham who was a linen and woollen draper.[6] In 1847 there was local dispute as to whether the word 'beggar' was mentioned in relation to Collison.[7] On 20th April 1849 he was involved in an exchange at a vestry meeting of St. Michael's where he was accused of not following protocol. John Gordon (Appendix 10) said at the meeting: 'The question was, why the proceedings of a meeting held this time last year were not inserted in the vestry book, a question he should have asked him had he (the Vicar) done him the courtesy to hear him. It was perfectly absurd for persons to persist in such ungentlemanly conduct.' Mr Rotherham then said: 'This may be the Irish way of doing business, but it is not Englishmanlike'. This remark was followed in the paper by the parenthesised call: (Cries of "Send him back to Ireland. Shame! Shame!")'.[8] The agitation stretched into the 1850s. In 1857 another row found Collison writing to the *Standard* about the continued health of his family if they were compelled to live in the city centre without having suitable accommodation.[9] Searby shed light on the complaints of the parishioners:

> 'Rotherham said that from the first Collison had treated him, a parishioner of thirty years standing, with the 'most supercilious contempt'. Rotherham got on badly with everybody, but in this instance many Anglicans agreed with him. Collison had 'an unhappy propensity to quarrel with everybody he came into contact with'. An intensely acrimonious correspondence with his curate - whom he accused of spreading rumours to the effect that he was angling for preferment, was published in the press. He was lazy, never visiting more than one sick person a week when he was in the parish, and in fact spending many months of each year from 1846 onwards in Paris or Brighton, He lived no nearer than Leamington, saying that he could not get a house in a healthy position in Coventry and that residence in that insalubrious city 'might be fatal for a member of his family'. During the cholera epidemic of 1849 he left the city hurriedly (or Paris) on the grounds that he was suffering fatigue and could not have stopped the epidemic if he stayed.'[10]

He had left Coventry by early 1859 and was recorded in Bristol in 1861.[11] On 7th January 1863 the *Coventry Times* noted that a dispute between the parishioners of Walcot, Bath, and their rector Collison had been settled 'on his handing over a cheque to the Churchwardens for the amount of monies objected to by the committee of the sacramental alms fund'. He died the same year in Nice, France.[12] Collison did not show any special sympathy toward Catholicism because of his Irish background. He was in attendance at the Archdeaconry of Coventry meeting protesting at the restoration of the Catholic Diocese of Birmingham in 1850.[13] He was also in attendance at the Coventry City Mission meeting in December 1856 (Appendix 10) where he saw 'wholesale proselytism' behind the Catholic purchase of the Raglan Street site. However he could not, even if he wished, have taken any other public stances since his behaviour was closely watched by a group of antagonistic parishioners who would have immediately seized on any perceived misstep by him to prove his unsuitability as Vicar of St. Michael's.

(1) HO107/1151.3.6.5 ED 7
(2) *Dublin Evening Packet* 16th July 1846
(3) *Coventry Herald* 22nd and 29th May 1846
(4) Ibid. 10th July 1846
(5) *Coventry Standard* 12th November 1847
(6) *Coventry Herald* 18th February 1848
(7) *Coventry Standard* 26th November 1847

(8) *Coventry Herald* 13th April 1849; *Coventry Standard* 20th April 1849
(9) *Coventry Standard* 6th February 1857
(10) Searby, Weavers and freemen, pp. 349-350
(11) RG9/1727.63.6 ED 11
(12) England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations) 1863 p. 228
(13) *Coventry Standard* 8th November 1850

George Cuffe 1847-1896)

He was born in Sligo. He was a teacher of mathematics in Ramsgate in 1871. In 1891 he was Rector of St. John's Church. He resided with his Derby-born wife and Coventry-born daughter aged 9 years at 1 Moseley Terrace. His active work closed in 1892 'when his mind became clouded'. He spent his remaining years in a private mental asylum in Hillingdon where he died November 1896.

RG10/994.37.21 ED 2
RG12/2452.42.20 ED 2
Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer 7th November 1896
England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations) 1896 p. 179

Robert De Lessart (1834-1890)

Robert Killigrew De Lessart was born in Dublin 16th September 1834.[1] His father Alfred Alexander and his uncle Charles Grierson De Lessert were both dentists in Dublin. Charles eventually settled in Wolverhampton where he established himself.[2] There are numerous advertisements of Alfred offering his services in St. Stephens Green, and in Dawson Street, Dublin into the 1840s. He appeared to have had serious debt problems (as also would appear his father) and may have been in London in June 1851.[3] He could not be located in the 1851 census and died in Coventry on 8th September 1859. Robert was recorded in Wolverhampton in 1851 as a dentist, in Kidderminster in 1857 (he married local-born Elizabeth Farmer in 1858), and in Birmingham in May-July 1859.[4] It is unclear in what way the paths of Robert and his father crossed at this point. The question to be asked is whether his father resided in Coventry for some time before his death in 1859 and did Robert come towards him and Coventry in 1859, or did his father living elsewhere making a social visit, or through illness end-up dying in the presence of Robert who had arrived in Coventry in mid-1859. His mother Martha died in Dublin circa 20th March 1886 aged 74 years.[5] Robert resided in Byron St, Coventry as a dentist from 1861, thereafter called Byron Place, Stoney Stanton Road, and in 1888 he was residing a 2 Bridge Terrace, Far Gosford Street.[6] In advertisements placed in the local newspaper in July 1868 and 1870 he referred to himself as a photographer.[7] He was a lunacy patient in Warwick Asylum in April 1890 and died aged 55 in the same year.[8] He may have been affected by depression which has been alleged to strike dentists and by the death of his daughter Cecilia aged 24 in Jan-Mar 1882.[9]

(1) Parish of St. Nicholas
Without (2) RG11.2798.48.15
ED 36
(3) Dublin Mercantile Advertiser 15th June 1835; Warder & Dublin Weekly Mail 6th May 1843; *Freeman's Journal* 7th February 1846; *Freeman's Journal* 11th June 1851
(4) HO107/2018.268.21 ED 1o; England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1858, Staffordshire, Vol. 6b p. 538; Birmingham (St. Luke), Church of England Baptisms, May 1859. DRO 17, Reel 9
(5) Burials Register Parish of St. George, Dublin 1886 p. 85
(6) RG9/2209.108.13 ED 28; Kelly's *Directory of Warwickshire* 1888
(7) *Coventry Herald* 17th July 1868 and 15th July 1870. White & Co's *Commercial & trades Directory of Birmingham* 1875 Vol. 1 p. 533
(8) UK, Lunacy Patients Admission Registers, National Archives, MH 94 Piece 29:1890; England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1890, (April-June), Warwickshire, Vol. 6d p. 322
(9) England and Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1882, (Jan-Feb-Mar), Warwickshire, Vol. 6d p. 307

Arthur Philip Du Cros (1871-1955)

He was influential in local business affairs at the turn of the century. He married a Coventry woman, and was a municipal councillor. However there is ultimately a strong non-resident feel in his commitment to Coventry, and he was not captured as residing there in any of the censuses. He is mentioned in connection with Coventry in 1893 and by early in the next decade he appears to be London based. His name is found in a number of newspaper reports but often these recorded his attendance at annual celebratory dinners in local hotels: as vice-president of Stoke Hockey Club, or Captain of 'D' Company of the Volunteer Branch, Royal Warwickshire Regiment.[1]

His father who had six other sons was William Harvey Du Cros (1846-1918), a protestant of Huguenot descent. He was a Dublin financier involved in cycle tyre production in that city. In 1893 the Pneumatic Tyre Co. moved from Dublin to Coventry and Irish workers were invited to transfer to Coventry with the move. Arthur Du Cros (third son), born in Dublin in 26th January 1871 was general manager of the company. In order to reconcile its Irish workers to life in Coventry and to help them mix with the local workers an Anglo-Irish Social Club was founded. Benjamin Tuke, an Irish international rugby player was also employed (See this Appendix). Arthur's brother Harvey Junior (1872-1928), resident in London, was a director of Cycle Components Manufacturing Co. Ltd. formed from the merger of three firms in Coventry involved in cycle manufacture. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century the cycle tyre operation in Coventry had transformed into large-scale motor vehicle tyre manufacturing centred in Birmingham.[2] This had been achieved through the acquisition of other companies, or association with them, or by flotations and renamings, and through consolidation of the company structure, product innovation, modification and diversification.

The *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 4th March 1908 wrote about Arthur: 'He has at the present sole management of the company's factories in Coventry, Birmingham, and London, which employs upwards of 3,000 people. In 1895 he married Maude, daughter of Mr. William Gooding, Coventry, of the firm of Rotherham and sons, watch manufacturers. He was elected a member of the Coventry City council for the old Gosford Street Ward in 1895 but took little interest in the work of the Corporation, and scarcely ever attended meetings. He interested himself more in the work of the Volunteers and was attached to one of the companies in Coventry…. He had a distinguished athletic career, and won thirteen amateur cycling championships, also excelling as a gymnast, boxer, and an all-round athlete. He is an expert motorist, besides being a good shot both with a rifle and in the field. He is in the Commission of the peace for Middlesex.'

In 1911 he was living in Edgware, Middlesex with Maude, 2 children and 5 servants.[3] During the depression of 1921 through inept dealing in rubber, the company based in Fort Dunlop, Castle Bromwich, lost £8 million and came close to bankruptcy. This resulted in management change and loss of control by the Du Cros family. His years in parliament, the burning of his house by suffragettes, the reason for his being created a baronet in 1916, his subsequent marriages after divorcing Maude, and his financial predicament, remain outside the ambit of this study.

(1) *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 13th September 1900; *Coventry Herald* 29th January 1904.
(2) Joan Skinner, Dunlop in Birmingham: the making of an Industrial Empire, in Barbara Tilson (ed.), *Made in Birmingham: Design & Industry, 1889-1989*, (Studley 1990) pp. 211-217
(3) RG14/7101.134 ED 4

James Duffy (1855-1902)

James Duffy was born in Sutton Coldfield in 1855 to Irish-born clock maker Bernard, and Ansley-born Esther Duffy. In 1881 James was living at 24 Brook Street, Coventry as a silver finisher. He was married to Birmingham-born Agnes and had two daughters

Agnes F (Frances), 1 year, born in London and Catherine, 1 month, born in Coventry. Thus he had come from London within the last year. His name was the most consistently mentioned across the decade of meetings held by the Land League in Coventry. In 1891 the family had returned to London and were living in Caxton Street with Agnes F described as paralysed – which may have caused a move from Coventry. In 1901 the family is found in Shoreditch, London with James now 47 years, described as a metal polisher on his own account. He died the following year.

RG9/2187.42.1 ED 3
RG10/3161.59.2 ED 3
RG11/3072.93.5 ED13
RG12/231.87.31 ED 3
RG13/272.79.23 ED 14
England and Wales, Civil registration Death Index, 1902, Shoreditch Vol. 1c p. 43

Mark A. Fenton (1849-1897)

Mark Anthony Fenton MD was born in 1839 the youngest son of John Hoysted Fenton of Stranahely, Co Wicklow. He qualified in Dublin University and Royal College of Surgeons. He was first appointed to Worcester Dispensary. He was a 22 year old surgeon enumerated in Stoney Stanton Road Hospital in 1871. He resigned from the hospital in 1872. He moved to the Coventry Provident Dispensary where he worked in partnership with Dr. McVeagh and Dr. Plowman. His detailed reports as Medical Officer of Health for Coventry were published in the *Coventry Herald* from c 1887 to 1894. In 1881 he resided at 1 Swithuns Terrace as a Gen Practitioner with his Coventry-born wife Martha Jane and their 3 young children. They employed 2 servants – a nurse and a cook. Martha's father was Alderman and J.P., James Marriott, who resided at 1 Spon Street and was a buider employing 120 men in 1861. They resided at 6 Stonleigh Terrace in 1871. In 1891 he was a Medical Practitioner residing with the same size family at 10 Queens Road. They now had 3 servants. The *Coventry Standard* in 1874 questioned why he, of the four candidates seeking the position of Coventry Medical Officer was offered the post; it made no reference to his Irish background. Perhaps his wife's background opened the door of advancement. In his annual report for 1876 he signed himself as a Diplomate in State Medicine. In a report he commented on the quality of flour for which he attracted rebuke, being told he was not employed as a public analyst. His reference to the Diploma may indicate that matters he raised – the quality of food – were he believed within his proper remit. As Medical Officer he wrote a number of impressive reports on how poor living conditions were conducive to the spread of disease. He was a churchwarden of St. Michael's in 1889. He died of pneumonia aged 48 on 6th April 1897 and left effects of £5,070 16s 4d. Martha Jane moved to London, and in 1901 resided in Kensington where she was also found in 1911. His brother William was a doctor in Kineton in 1901.

Leamington Spa Courier 10th April 1897, 17th April 1897
Medical Times and Gazette 14th October 1874 p. 434
The Lancet 1897 p. 1123
RG13/2937.44.12 ED 5
RG9/2203.54.14 ED 20
RG10/3178.41.2 ED 33
RG10/3182.71.1 ED 26
RG11/3070/.35.22 ED 33
RG12/2451.76.4 ED 33
RG13/38.131.23 ED 27
RG14/124.19 ED 37
Coventry Standard 5th June 1874
Coventry Times 31st January 1877, 6th March 1889

John Clement Fowler (1851-1929)

He was born in West Bromwich, Staffordshire in 1851 and ordained in 1878. He was Prefect of St. Gregory's College, Downside for a number of years. He ministered in Coventry from 1896 to 1903. He left Coventry for Belmont, Herefordshire where he was Prior until 1914. He was Abbot of St. Albans from 1917.

RG13/2908.14.30 ED 23

John Gulson (1813-1904)

On his death John Gulson was called, in the *Coventry Herald* 30th December 1904, Coventry's foremost citizen. In 1867 he was elected mayor, a position he retained for a second year. He was chairman of the Coventry School Board for fifteen years, from its establishment. He provided the site and financial assistance for the city library opened in 1869 in Derby Lane, and provided an adjacent site to enable a reference library to be opened in 1890. He was a Liberal Unionist. The fact that he was married to an Irishwoman must have been known and have lain in the subconscious of Coventrians. To Irish advantage, Coventrians would have realised that the Irish people were disparate in Irish county of origin and in disposition. In 1862 he had married Sophia Louisa Miller whose father John, of Moneymore, County Derry, was agent for the Irish estates of the worshipful Company of Drapers. Louisa was known in the city for her altruistic work. She raised a public collection for an orphan. She engaged in the social life of the city and was active in raising funds for the Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital. She died in 1895.

John E. Short, *The John Gulson Story*, (Coventry 1978)

Robert Joseph Halpin (1855-1935)

Perhaps one of the most striking success stories of second generation Irish was Robert Joseph Halpin. His father was Dubliner Richard Halpin (1829-1915) referred to in Appendix 20. His father and mother were Dubliners born circa 1830. Though born in 1855 Robert first appears in the census in 1871. There is a lack of information on the Halpin background or movement from Dublin. In 1861 his father Richard is mentioned on his own in 1861 as a married glassmaker in Coventry.[1] In 1871 Richard appears in Coventry with his wife Ellen, Robert age 16, born in Salford, and the younger children from age 10 down, all born in Coventry.[2] This mysterious sequence did not draw newspaper attention, nor was his Irish background ever alluded to in print; that he was born in Salford gave cover in newspapers to the fact that he had Irish parents. His Catholicity however was widely known and for half a century he was a member of St. Osburg's choir. He was the Catholic nominee on the School Board from 1891 to 1893. He was elected a Conservative councillor in 1909, and became an alderman in 1924. He was appointed Justice of the Peace in 1913. He served on many municipal committees, was a Council representative on several public bodies. For 23 years he was a member of the Board of Guardians. He had extensive interests in property.[3] He married Mary Ann Tew in April-Jun 1877; the Tews were an old Catholic farming family in Harnall Lane.[4] Unusually however, the Halpin family could not be located in the 1901 census. Mary Ann was recorded in 3 Moseley Terrace, Coundon Road in 1911 without her husband; Robert may have been visiting Blackppol at the time.[5] She had been an invalid for a considerable time before she died in 1924 when she left £29,551 in her will.[6] The next reference to him is on the occasion of his death on 14th August 1935 when he was given a civic funeral with flags lowered to half-mast on civic buildings. He left £121,807 in his will.[7] It has to be surmised that his advancement in life was initially due to his marriage to Mary Anne Tew who became wealthy from family ownership of land in Harnall Lane, or from its sale for residential development.

(1) RG9/2203.81.7 ED 22

(2) RG10/3178.96.27 ED 35

(3) *Coventry Herald* 16th August 1935
(4) Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1877, Warwickshire, Vol. 6d p. 696; HO107/2068.378.29 ED 1s
(5) RG14/18540.311 ED 2; RG14/25413.122 ED 11
(6) *Coventry Herald* 2nd January 1925, 29th May 1925
(7) England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administration), 1936 p. 35

Oscar Harmer (1849-1939)

In the census of 1911 he revealed he was from Cork and his wife was from Brighton. The circumstances of his birth in Cork are unknown.[1] He grew up in Waterbury, Conn., USA. He worked as a contractor for a number of engineering companies and then moved to take charge of the Capewell Horse Nail company's English factory in Millwall Docks. In 1894 he was an engineer with Babcock & Wilcox, 147 Queen Victoria Street, Coventry.[2] In 1897 he joined the manufacturer of machine tools Alfred Herbert, Ltd., Coventry, on the invitation of Sir Alfred Herbert. He was its technical director, and soon after he joined the firm, he developed a new foundry at Edgwick. He later became a director of the company.[3] To his remarkable technical skill and salesmanship was attributed much of the company's success.[4] In January 1918 he was embarrassingly convicted of large scale food hoarding the previous year (tea, sugar, etc.). On appeal to Warwickshire Quarter sessions in April, the court upheld two of the five convictions of the magistrates; the penalty of £550 was reduced to £60 and the month's imprisonment imposed by the magistrates was remitted.[5] When he died in 11th October 1939 he left substantial effects of £112,006.[6]

(1) RG14/18525 ED 15
(2) UK, Mechanical Engineer Records 1847-1930 (Mechanical Proposals 1894)
(3) Grace's Guide to British Industrial History, http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Oscar_Harmer Accessed 31st July 2017
(4) S.B.Saul, The Machine Tool Industry in Britain to 1914, in R.P.T Davenport-Hines (ed.) *Capital, Entrepreneurs and Profits* (Abingdon 1990) p. 310
(5) *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 11th April 1918
(6) England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1939 p. 88

James Hart (1829-1915)

Born in Newry County Down in 1829 he came to Coventry as a young man. Commonly referred to later as 'Paddy', he was to become one of the major (and most trenchant) ribbon manufacturers in the city. In 1841 Irish-born Francis Hart aged 40, described as a 'Ribbon 'm'' lived with his 12 year old son James in Hertford Street who was stated as born in Warwickshire. In 1851 Francis was not present but his son James Hart who now lived in Earl Street, was in contradiction, noted as Irish-born and being a 'R Manufacturer 340 hands'; none of his 5 domestic servants was Irish-born.

In 1861 he had moved to 126 Much Park Street and was recorded as 'R Man 100 men 580 women'. In 1871 he was recorded as a 'Ribbon manufacturer' residing at 8 Quadrant. Prest mentioned him as one of the big six manufacturers in the city. He was according to Searby a keen Baptist who was an active on the Coventry City Mission.

He was the second largest of the Bedworth Ribbon Manufacturers. At one time he employed over 400 people in Bedworth, probably a combination of outworkers and those in his factory. He also employed over 500 in Coventry. He married Martha Walker, fourth daughter of Benjamin Walker a Ribbon Manufacturer in 1847. Although a capable businessman he was stated to be a most unforgiving employer and probably the most hated man, amongst the ribbon weaving manufacturers of Coventry and North Warwickshire. He exhibited at the Great Exhibition of 1851 and he highlighted his low production costs. It is believed Hart opened his first ribbon weaving factory in St. Agnes Lane. In 1857 at St. John's Bridge, West Orchard, he opened his Victoria Works known colloquially as 'Paddy's Folly'. The five storey factory was 127 feet long and had 250 power looms.

In 1867 he was involved in a dispute with weavers, who saw his wage reductions, on three occasions and a fourth attempted, as dragging down the whole trade on a cheap labour principle. He appeared a hard taskmaster expecting men to work a two-loom system which according to a complainant 'was too much for any man to do, and men were made old at 27 and 30 years of age trying to do it'. He was said to put the men in fear and fined them if they did not produce the correct quantity.

The *Coventry Standard* 1st and 7th February 1868 reported that a firearm had been discharged over Gosford Green at Samuel Hitchins, a leading draper in the city, as he made his way home to Stoke. There was a suggestion that it was done for a lark but there was also a letter that Mr Hitchins received, which stated that the shot was intended for Hart. In the style in which it was written it read:

> 'Mr Hitchins it was not my Intention of shooting you but Paddy Heart and that b--- I will shoot and then Kendrick [Relieving Officer to the poor] and then I shall die happy. So help me God I shall never die happy till then Let him turn his men off that minds two Looms If they don't Come out they may look out has well has that B--- Paddy good Night and god Bless you for your Life Being Spared'

Mr Hart's offer to reduce wages from 18s. to 15s. was rejected by some weavers. It was intimated to the many weavers in the Workhouse, who were engaged there breaking stones and picking oakum, that Mr Hart sought weavers. However when they heard of Hart's onerous conditions that they were required to tend two-large looms for 15s. they refused. On hearing of their rejection Kendrick no longer allowed them to work as usual in the Workhouse. On the basis of rumours circulating about the assassination attempt, his factory workers wrote to the *Coventry Standard* 8th February 1868 stating they held a meeting at which a resolution was passed 'that no ill-feeling or animosity…exists towards that gentleman'. Hart also wrote to the paper denying that he had reduced wages in the last nine months. He was a Conservative councillor from March 1870 to October 1874 for Spon Street Ward. The *Coventry Herald* 19th January 1872 reported his son Benjamin Charles was killed in Cheddar when he fell over steep cliffs. In the 1870s he was a figure mentioned socially in the city e.g. in 1877 he was a member of the Stoke School Board, and attended the St. Michael's Charities Ball with his wife.

Tracing Hart and his family on his upwardly mobile way around Coventry is interesting. All were good addresses; many of Coventry's biggest names in the mid-1800s lived in Earl Street and Much Park Street. In the census returns he is found in: 1851 - Earl Street, 1861 - 126 Much Park Street, and 1871 - 8 The Quadrant. In 1872 James Hart built a mansion 'Copsewood Grange' in an estate of 100 acres, off Binley Road to the west of Coventry. He sold the estate in 1881 and was found residing in 31 Clarendon Square, Leamington Spa. His Coventry factory was taken over by the Rover and Centaur Cycle companies. In 1882 he was declared bankrupt but following this declaration he returned to the trading of silk ribbon in Bedworth. In 1891 he was residing in Hertford House, Queens Road, Coventry which was described as a substantial stucco residence in its own ground. Although appearing to remain commercially sound, the company's insolvency had been hidden. Hart and his son William were found guilty at Warwick Assizes of having falsified the sales ledger of Hart and Co. (Limited), ribbon manufacturers, Coventry, with intent to defraud. He was sentenced to twelve months hard labour for fraud while his son received six months hard labour on 29th July 1893. In the 1901 census, Hart is recorded as living on own means with two sons and a daughter, near to Lords Cricket Ground 43, Acacia Road, Marylebone, London. He died in London, aged 88. The *Coventry Standard* said of him: 'No man, in his time, was better known in the city than James Hart. He rode magnificient horses and drove handsome equipages in the Copsewood era. His was a striking personality. Of medium height and sturdy build, he looked the picture of vigour, and his dress was immaculate in its quietude and good taste'.

Extracts from *Reynold's Newspaper* 31st July 1893
Historic Coventry, https://forum.historiccoventry.co.uk/main/search-posts.php?q=paddy+hart Accessed 23rd March
Coventry Herald 17th December 1847, 29th March 1867
HO107/1152/8.18.31 ED 16
HO107/2067.263.3 ED 13
RG9/2202.56.15 ED 12
RG10/3176.34.11 ED 14
RG11/3093.48.39 ED 14
RG12/2451.61.9 ED 12
RG13/118.81.33 ED 8
Searby, Weavers and freemen, p. 256
Coventry Standard 7th January 1916

Thomas Hennessey (1839-1902)

Thomas is mentioned on a number of occasions in the narrative. He appears to have been a substantial shoemaker as he employed 7 men and 4 boys in 1861. He was well placed in Well Street to take advantage of both city and Irish trade. In later years his wife and daughters assisted him in boot making. From 1881 to 1883 he was licensee of the Crystal Palace Vaults, Burges. In the last decade of the century he became licensee of the Wagon & Horses which was a few doors away from his boot shop. For a year before he died in 1902 he was living with his married daughter in a solid house in the select Ellys Road towards the then northern edge of the city.

Table A.2.1 Profile of Thomas Hennessey showing his attachment to Well Street and retirement in Ellys Road

Street	Name	R to H	M C	A M	A F	Occupation	Birthplace
1861							
11 Well Street	Thomas Hennessey	Head	M	22		Shoemaker Em 7M, 4B	Ireland
	Caroline Hennessey[1]	Wife	M		20		Coventry
	Charles Hennessey	Son		1m			Coventry
	Charles Hennessey	Bro			16		Queens Co
1871							
2 Well Street	Thomas Hennessey	Head	M	34		Cordwainer Em 6 M	Ireland
	Caroline Hennessey	Wife	M		30	Ribbon Weaver Winder	Coventry
	Charles Hennessey	Son		10		Scholar	Coventry
	Eliza Hennessey	Dau			8	Scholar	Coventry
	Mary Ann Hennessey	Dau			6	Scholar	Coventry
1881							
2 Well Street	Thomas Hennessey[2]	Head	M	44		Boot & Shoe Manufacturer	Ireland
	Caroline Hennessey	Wife	M		39		Coventry
	Charles Hennessey	Son		20		Clicker	Coventry
	Eliza Hennessey	Dau			18	Assistant (B)	Coventry
	Mary Ann Hennessey	Dau			15	Milliner	Coventry
1891							
2 Well Street	Thomas Hennessey[3]	Head	M	54		Boot Maker	Ireland
	Caroline Hennessey	Wife	M		50	Assistant Bootmaker	Coventry
	Eliza Hennessey	Dau			27	Assistant Bootmaker	Coventry
	Mary Ann Hennessey	Dau			25	Assistant Bootmaker	Coventry
1901							
11 Ellys Road	William McCarthy[4]	Head	M	38		Builder & Contractor	Barbadoes
	Elizabeth McCarthy	Wife	M		38		Coventry
	Thomas Hennessey[5]	F in L	Wi dr	64		Boot Manufacturer Retd	Ireland

1 Caroline Dwyer daughter of: hand loom ribbon weaver father and silk winder mother, both Irish-born, living in Bishop Street in 1851.
2 Licensee of the Crystal Palace Vaults 1881-83 (*Herald* 20th Jan 1882) 3 Licensee of the Old Wagon and Horses 1896
4 Also 3 children aged 8, 4, and 7m.
5 Died 8th September 1902. Probate effects £87 1s. 4d.
RG13/2910.96.40 ED 4; England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1902 p. 123

Michael Hogan (1821-1887)

He was recorded aged 28 in 1851 with Irish-born wife Sarah aged 33, at 53 Lichfield Street, as a shoemaker employing 2 men.[1] In 1861 he resided at 35 New Buildings as a shoemaker with his 3 sons also shoemakers (2 born in Birmingham including William {next entry}) and 2 employees.[2] The 1871 census revealed that he was from Cork and Sarah was from Newry.[3] In 1881 at 35 New Buildings he was a boot and shoe maker while Sarah was a binder. Residing with them was one Coventry-born son aged 29 and 2 Irish lodgers all in shoemaking.[4] He died in 1887.[5]

(1) HO107/2057.59.36 ED 2
(2) RG/2207.71.11 ED 13
(3) RG10/3180.8.10 ED 10
(4) RG11/3072.39.10 ED 10
(5) England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index Warwickshire, Vol. 6d, p. 284

William Hogan 1842-1922

Son of Michael above. The *Coventry Herald* 20th February 1863 told that William was charged with being the father of an illegitimate child, born to Bridget Kane on 28th of June 1862. Ms Kane said she had kept company with the defendant for eight years and William had paid to support her and the child until three weeks ago. The court ordered him to pay 1s. 6d per week.

In 1871 he was written as Coventry-born cordwainer employing 3 men at 64 Well Street. In 1881 he was a 38 year old Cordwainer in 3 Well Street. He was mentioned as vice-president of the Coventry branch of the Land League in 1881 and 1882. He was recorded as secretary in 1888 and as president of the Coventry branch of the Irish National League in 1890. In 1891 he was noted as a Birmingham-born cordwainer occupying 3 Well Street. In 1901 he still resided at 3 Well Street as a bootmaker employer, but had moved to 7 Russell Street in 1911. Hogan married Coventry-born Charlotte Brown in the Protestant Church of St. John on 11th March 1866.

HO107/2057.212.21 ED 8
RG10/3179.74.42 ED 4
RG 11/3071.33.1 ED 3
Dublin Weekly Nation 26th March 1881, 23rd April 1881, 1st April 1882
Coventry Herald 21st September 1888 and 29th August 1890
RG12/2452.16.26 ED 1
RG13/2910.7.8 ED 1
RG14/18579.223 ED 41
Church of England Marriage Banns. St. John Baptist, Coventry, 1866, Warwickshire Anglican Registers, Roll Engl/2/1234 DR 411
England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1922, Warwickshire, Vol. 6d p. 516

John Killen 1820-1902

John Killen was licensee of the Wagon and Horses from 1886 to 1894 where it appears the Land League held meetings. He was succeeded as licensee by Thomas Hennesey who held the licence until 1903. In 1861 John was found in H7C2 Bond Street. In 1871 he was a 49 year Irish-born ribbon weaver living in H6C2 Bond Street with his silk winder wife and son who was an iron fitter, both Coventry-born. His son was seventeen years of age, so John had arrived in the 1850s. In 1881 he resided at 7 Well Street with his wife and son. In 1891 he was a widower publican in 7 Well Street with six boarders all British-born but the names of half: Mark Monaghan, Richard Burke and James Conroy strongly suggested an Irish background. In 1901 he was a pauper resident of the Workhouse. It was mentioned that in December 1899 at about 80 years of age he sang at the Christmas dinner arranged for aged Catholics by the St. Vincent de Paul in St. Osburg's Schools.

Real Ale Rambles, http://www.realalerambles.co.uk/history/W/waggon_and_horses_well.html Accessed 24th January 2019

RG9/2206.48.25 ED 3
RG10/3179.46.23 ED 3
RG11/3071.33.2 ED 3
RG12/2452.16.25 ED 1
RG13/2908.144.11 ED Workhouse
Coventry Evening Telegraph 29th December 1899

John Lamb and his three sons

John (1791-1863) appears as a 50 year old Irish-born navy pensioner in Bristol in 1841 which mars the assumption that he had come from Dublin with his family during the Liberties exodus of the 1820s and 1830s.[1] He lived in Hertford Square with his wife, 3 daughters, 2 Irish-born sons - Peter, 24, and James, 22, - all, except his wife, were described as hand loom weavers. There was also an apprentice and a servant.[2] A third Irish-born son John, 24 years, also a hand loom weaver was married and lived a few doors away.[3] The birth of these sons in Ireland allows them to be traced as representatives of the second generation Irish.

John (1827-1883) married Emma Clewes on 11th May 1850 when he was a weaver in Hertford Sq. Emma died 25th July 1865.[4] He was residing in Vernon Street in 1861 and 1871.[5] Their son John William died aged 20 on 11th April 1873.[6] Their daughter Jane died in 1876 aged 25. In 1881 he referred to himself as a brewer and lived alone in 7H13C Jordan Well.[7] He died in 1883 aged 56.[8]

James (1830-1891) moved to 24 Brook Street by 1861 where his Coventry-born wife Elizabeth died in January 1871 aged 39.[9] In 1881 he was lodging as a silk weaver with his married daughter.[10]

Peter (1829-After 1901) moved with his family to Birmingham about 1862.[11] He remarried by 1891 and was alive in 1901.[12] A Peter Lamb was acquitted with 12 others of riot at the Summer Assizes in Warwick on 12th July 1867.[13]

(1) HO107/373.16.23 ED 1
(2) HO107/2067.630.17 ED 31
(3) HO107/2067.631.19 ED 31
(4) *Coventry Herald* 28th July 1865
(5) RG9/2208.75.33 ED 18; RG10/3180.69.31 ED 13
(6) *Coventry Herald* 11th April 1873
(7) RG11/3066.36.14 ED 3
(8) England & Wales Civil Registration Death Index 1837-1915, Warwickshire, Vol. 6d p. 323
(9) RG9/2208.69.21 ED 18; *Coventry Standard* 13th January 1871
(10) RG11/3073.13.17 ED 15
(11) RG10/3102.47.2 ED 31
(12) RG12/2368.43.34 ED 9; RG13/2829.145.21 ED 43
(13) England and Wales Criminal Registers 1791-1892 Warwickshire HO27/148.94 Year 1867

Michael Maher (1798-1862)

Dublin-born Michael Maher came to Coventry at 28 years of age and was at first involved with the trade of the city. He took employment as a reporter for the *Coventry Herald* from 1826 until 1833 during which period two of his children were born. He found Catholics in the town so poor that he taught them in his spare time in a local school. He wrote to his father for some Catholic books in order to create a freely accessed library for poor co-religionists. The family moved to Birmingham where Michael was a bookseller, and printer, but more noted as a correspondent for a number of newspapers. He was a Birmingham town councillor on three occasions and a Guardian of the Poor. He was spoken of as a warm hearted but strict Catholic. A large gathering, with sixteen mourning coaches, attended his public funeral 30th June 1862 at which Bishop Ullathorne gave an euphistic discourse, in which he extolled the many admirable qualities of the departed. In the midst of the address, and perhaps with a

slight amount of calculation in so placing, that the panegyricism would conceal it, there was a short vociferation that bears retelling.

> 'Mr Maher was born in Dublin in the calamitous year 1798. Cradled amidst the horrors of the great insurrection, the yet unconscious child was encircled around by the terrors and disorders through which the State vindicated its supremacy, and he respected, after they were accomplished, those laws which were stern almost beyond the power of human nature to endure. The windows of his parental house looked out on the scene where Robert Emmet paid the forfeit of his life; and when the traditions of that awful time, still fresh, were put by parental affection in the heart of the child [Maher]…the lesson was so inculcated as to inspire him with that dread of social disorder which became one of the strictest principles of his mind and heart. With his mother's milk he sucked in a dread of resistance to constituted authority… The first year of his [Ullathorne's] ministry were devoted to the victims of that reign of terror, and in a remote land [Australia] he conversed with them, and first learnt, in such ways of dread and turmoil, that the innocent were made to suffer with the guilty.'

Interest in Maher arises from the important but brief insights he provided on the state of Coventry which did not appeal to him after 1833. Maher's later life was spent in Birmingham where he was a city councillor, and his obsequies are more relevant to there, but his early link to Coventry, and the nature of the funeral formalities - the scene and timing, the congregation, and the outlook of Ullathorne, kindle interest and raise contexts which on exposition may have application to Coventry and may help fix the town in a midland mid-century setting.

In recalling Maher's life journey, Bishop Ullathorne as a spiritual advisor, found in the lifestyle of the deceased an example with which to promote the Christian way of life. However the moment of reflection also gave Ullathorne the opportunity to address the two audiences that would rarely coalesce in front of him. Yorkshire-born Ullathorne was making the comments before the packed congregation in St Chad's Cathedral which included the Member of Parliament, Aldermen, Councillors and other influential, local notables together, no doubt, with many Catholics of Irish origin. Birmingham experienced a particular heady atmosphere after mid-century, created by a rising number of Irish migrants, Protestant activists resenting Catholic confidence, and Fenian sympathisers. This eventually flared into violence in Park Street in 1867 when ignited by the toxic rhetoric of William Murphy.

In the early 1860s there was a lull that Ullathorne may have believed indicated relations were improving, or he was in a 'see no evil' mode, and in this frame of mind provided some positive and negative remarks to each audience. To those of influence he explained.

> 'But Michael Maher had another work of spiritual charity in which he was engaged. He lost no opportunity of clearing up the prejudiced and false ideas which influenced so disastrously the interest of the Catholic poor, and if in Birmingham there was now less of such prejudice than in any other town of the country, he had no hesitation in ascribing its cause in part to the perseverance of Mr Maher, and to his influence as exercised with the press and in municipal affairs.'

Ullathorne was using the opportunity to discourage the Irish who were attending a compatriot's funeral, from turning to social disorder in the years ahead. That no matter how provoked or passionate the Catholic community, and by extension the Irish, might be, that the example of Maher in still respecting the law had merit. However it is also a fact that there was no requirement on Ullathorne to raise, and express in the terms he did, how forcefully the state vindicated its supremacy and engaged in a reign of terror. To his 'English' audience he was pointing out some home truths about the arrogance of

power and the need for justice and fairness to Irish people. To his Catholic brethren he was not creating resentment, because this sentiment, he recognised, was established already for many in the congregation, through the stories of parents.

It would appear he saw Maher not so much as Irish but as a Catholic in England with an Irish background. In his lengthy paean there are one or two necessary mentions of Ireland but the word 'Irish' was not used. 'Catholic poor' and '[Maher's] own countrymen', who Maher felt that 'they were exiles in a strange land, the poorest of the poor' were oblique references indicating the Irish were spoken of firstly as the poor, then as Catholic poor.

Coventry Herald 27th June 1862
Birmingham Daily Post 25th June, 1st July 1862
The Nation 5th July 1862
The Evening Freeman 27th June 1862
Paz, *Popular Anti-Catholicism in Mid-Victorian England*, p. 95
HO107/2056.10.13 ED 1

Patrick J Maloney (1873-1970)

In 1901 at 28 years and 'Manager of India Tyre Co' he resided at 93 Holyhead Road, Coventry with Dublin-born wife Esther and their 3 Coventry-born young children. Little else could be ascertained from the census.

RG13/2908.103.7 ED 23

P. McDonnell (1852-1919?)

Signing reports and a letter as P. McDonnell, he provided accounts on Irish nationalist affairs in Coventry in the 1880s referred to in Chapter 4. Born in Wicklow or Dublin City in 1852, his whereabouts before his appearance in Coventry in 1876 is not known. The details of a number of Patrick McDonnells in Britain could have related to him.

There is reference to a Patrick McDonnell marrying in Coventry Jul-Aug-Sep 1876. His wife was Eliza Boyle who married him while she was quite young. There is confusion over her provenance. She was a daughter of Darby Boyle who in 1871 was recorded as a 43 year old agricultural labourer from Galway who was living in 13HC8 West Orchard with his Galway wife and 6 Coventry-born children. Previously in 1861 Ellen and Martin, their two children already born, and senior in age to Eliza in subsequent censuses, were also noted as born in Coventry. Martin states in 1911 that he was born in Coventry. However in the 1881 census while Eliza still resided in Coventry, and in those taken in Ireland for 1901 and 1911, she states she was born in Dublin. In 1871 Darby and family lived in 13HC8 West Orchard which must have been a difficult court for an enumerator to cover and confusion may have arisen, or she may have been adopted, or she may have decided to assume an Irish place of birth like her parents and husband. (Incidentally Darby had come to Coventry via York where he resided in 1851). Patrick was elected president of the Coventry Typographical Society in January 1879 for the ensuing 12 months, but in July the Society met again to elect another president and accorded a vote of thanks to him for his service.

In 1881 Patrick as a 30 year old printer is recorded with Eliza, 22, and their family of two at 52 Castle Street, Coventry. According to places of children's birth he appeared to have returned to Dublin between 1887 and 1889 which match the discontinuance of regular reports from him on the League in Coventry. Information recorded in the Irish census for 1891 no longer exists. He is shown living in Dublin with Eliza and family in the currently available Irish censuses of 1901 and 1911 as a printer. Thereafter he does not appear to have been notably active in Irish affairs.

There is a reference to a P. McDonnell presiding over a general branch meeting of the National Land League in Dublin in February 1883.

England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1876 Warwickshire 6d p. 678

RG10/3179.24.7 ED 2
RG9/2206.25.15 ED 2
RG14/18549 ED 11
RG11/3073.117.34 ED 19
HO107/2355.287.17 ED 7a
Coventry Times 15th January 1879
Coventry Standard 18th July 1879
Irish Census 1901 Dublin 48/17, Castle Terrace (4), Arran Quay
Irish Census 1911 Dublin 42/92 Great Charles St (10), Mountjoy
Newcastle Courant 23rd February 1883

William McGowran (1838-1920)

In 1841 James McGowran (1805-1861), a weaver and his wife Ann a winder, both Dublin-born, were rearing their two local-born children William and Prudence in Much Park Street. William was baptised on 20th May 1838 in St. Osburg's with Thomas Doran and Sarah Broughall noted in the Register as sponsors. That Thomas was a sponsor shows the friendship that existed between Dublin weaving families in Coventry. Ann's Irish born mother was named Prudence Broughila; the families of Irish-born weaver David Broughill in Swanswell Terrace, Irish-born weaver William Broughall in close-by Fleet Street, and hand loom weaver Edward Braughill in Jordan Well were most likely those of her brothers. In 1851 William aged 12 years, with his family and mother-in-law Prudence had moved to nearby Freeth Street where they were still found in 1861. William married Agnes Phillips on 16th June 1860. She was a Coventry-born daughter of Dublin-born Henry Phillips who was a hand loom ribbon weaver residing in West Orchard.[1] The family moved to Derby about 1864 where they were recorded in 1871 and in 1881 without William. While the rest of the family were still in Derby, William was recorded in Coventry 1881 as a 42 year old married boarder without wife, and occupied as an elastic net weaver. By 1891 William and the family were reunited in Coventry and in 1893 he became licensee of the Star & Garter at 39 Albert Street.[2] He became a Liberal town councillor for Bishop Street Ward in November 1899, and in 1911 was a councillor for Hillfields Ward. He topped the poll in 1902. He did not seek re-election in 1911 and died in June 1920; his wife died in January 1911. He examples in his life the Catholic/Liberal/Irish interplay. He was not mentioned as a member of the Land League.[3] His parents had further children by 1861: Mary Ann, Elizabeth, James (1850-1911) and John. His sister Prudence married Daniel Bennett a blacksmith but in 1901 she was to be found a 61 year old widow living with the family of her nephew James McGowran (1850-1911). He was a 51 year old watch finisher, that lived with his wife and 4 children at H1C1 Hill Street.

The occupations of James' (1850-1911) children may be mentioned, to show from the evidence available, how there had not been significant occupational or geographic mobility over the generations to 1901, but there had been embrace of the especial local occupations. Emma 19 years was a coach lace weaver, Willie 17 years, was an iron polisher in the cycle trade and the others Harry and Maud were scholars. Willie was before the bench in 1902 where he admitted being drunk and disorderly in Fleet Street. He said he was not used to drink, and the little he had overcame him. It was noted the prisoner had a good character and had to only pay costs of 5s.[4] James (1850-1911) continued to reside in H1C1 Hill Street until his death in June 1911, with Maud now 16 years and a cotton winder – all those resident in the house were described themselves under the nationality heading as 'British'.[5]

William's brother John (1852-1915) left the same nationality column blank; his family in adulthood by 1911 seems to have achieved a more trained occupational semblance, that appears to indicate a process of assimilation. It was stated in his obituary that 'he was well known in the city, having engaged very energetically in philanthrophic work, was associated with various Druid and Foresters Lodges, and was for over a quarter of a

century steward at the Coventry Liberal Club'. His children James E. and Alice would appear to have retained a great fondness for Ireland and would have sung on a number of occasions the proxy Irish national anthem – "God Save Ireland".[6] In 1914 James E. was choirmaster of St. Osburg's.[7] Alice, 'teacher of voice production, singing and theory of music' appeared most socially integrated being widely known for her pupils' choir which gave much appreciated concerts (which contained no Irish material in the repertoire), in St. Mary's Hall and elsewhere.[8]

Mention may be made of William's son Charles McGowran (1875-1961) born in Derby who was licensee from 1903-1906 of The Lord Aylesford where for a brief period in 1907 a refreshed United Irish League held meetings.

(1) HO107/2068.30.5 ED 1b; *Coventry Standard* 16th June 1860
(2) RG10/3568.87.53 ED 18; RG11/3073.67.40 ED 17; RG11/3397.41.25 ED 20; RG12/2454.113.31 ED 15
(3) RG14/18554 ED 16; Robert Donald (ed.), *The Municipal Year Book for 1911*, (London 1911) p. 59; *Coventry Herald* 26th July 1900; *Coventry Herald* 28th July 1911; Robert Donald (ed.), *The Municipal Year Book for 1902*, (London 1902) p. 93;
(4) *Coventry Herald* 25th April 1902
(5) RG13/2908.128.15 ED 24; RG14/18535 ED 25
(6) Peter Alter, Symbols of Irish Nationalism, in Alan O'Day (ed.), *Reactions to Irish Nationalism 1865-1914*, (London 1987) p. 7
(7) *Coventry Standard* 17th July 1914
(8) *Coventry Telegraph* 7th February 1914, 7th February 1917, 5th December 1917

Thomas McLean (1800-1867)

Not all Irish were illiterate, or lacking in confidence to express an opinion in writing, as Thomas McLean showed in his two letters to the *Coventry Herald.* The first written in July 1851 warned about the risks to weavers in breaking the 'list' agreement between masters and weavers and expressed his belief that:

> 'the list has been a blessing to the town in more than one way, for while the workman knew his income, the master knew his profits and Coventry has been saved from the riot and tumult too often the fruit of dissatisfaction, caused by fluctuating wages. I am sure to break the list is calculated to bring certain ruin into every family engaged in the ribbon trade, and to impoverish many of the respectable tradesmen of this City.'[1]

The second letter in February 1852 is quoted at more length, in that while displaying his ability to write and his respect for education, it supplies rare Irish migrant articulation, as well as first hand insight into the poor circumstances that forced children into forfeiting their schooling. The body of the letter shows such participation in the English milieu, that it would not be suspected - apart from his giveaway reference to the Dublin songwriter Thomas Moore that he was born in Dublin.

> 'Sir, I have just read an address to the working classes of the City, on the importance of educating their children; which is all very good, if it could be carried out. But I fear it is not practicable as far as the weavers of Coventry are concerned. In my opinion, there are great difficulties in the way, which must render the blessings of education to them impossible, under the present circumstances. In proof of this, I think the scanty wages* of the weavers is one great obstacle in the way; not because he cannot spare fourpence or sixpence per week, though there are many who cannot afford even that: - but because they want the labour of their children to enable them to keep life and soul together and a house over their heads. If a weaver cannot find employment at home, he is compelled, from dire necessity, to send them out to nurse babies, turn bar looms, or to fill shute, their wages ranging from 1s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. per week. Now, Sir, I should like to know how these poor children are to be educated under such distressing circumstances… These children, after a few years, find their way

> generally into large factories as pickers-up, and ultimately to take charge of a loom. It is then the fond hopes of the parents seem at once blasted: - their authority set at defiance, the home of their childhood is abandoned to mingle with companions in misfortune like themselves, and often to become parents while they are still children. This is a bad state of society; this looks as if something was wrong. What sort of people will the next generation be, if there is nothing done to elevate the working classes of England to educate their children?... If any gentleman can show how these difficulties are to be overcome, I will say of him, with Moore,
>
> "Far dearer the grave or the prison,
> Illum'd by one patriot name,
> Than the trophies of all who have risen,
> On liberty's ruins to fame."
>
> Your's respectfully,
>
> Thomas McLean
>
> *In no period of the history of weaving did the people earn less money than at the present time, although we are told we have money to educate our children: and I do positively think it is not in the power of any weaver, single handed to support a family.'[1] [His asterisk][2]

In the weaving industry years, or during the Chartist age, there is no mention of any Irish identified as 'Irish' participating in or fronting proletarian action in Coventry. Thomas McLean is the only person identifiable. On 15th July 1851 a public meeting of weavers was held to consider the actions of a manufacturer who would not be bound by the list of prices. McLean who was on the Action Committee spoke in favour of retaining the list system and seconded a motion to that effect.[3] He resigned from the Committee on 22nd July 1851 over local moves to break the list system.

The *Coventry Herald* 15th March 1850 reported Thomas spoke at a weavers' meeting in St. Mary's Hall related to their dispute with the Messrs H and C. Bray. He spoke positively about C. Bray being an honourable man and then went on to take a broader view.

> 'Mr McLean then showed the amount of a weaver's income who made half a length a week for the C. and H Bray, when one shilling was stopped as a forfeit, and another for his loom, to say nothing of his time altering, when he went without money altogether. He then asked what remained for improving their dwellings, clothing, and educating their children, to say nothing about the roast beef and plum pudding of old England. Such talk was mocking our misery. Those who least deserved the roast beef feasted upon it, while the poor weaver had only the bone. While men in other trades were kindly treated, the weaver was scarcely an object of sympathy.'

The *Coventry Herald* 21st June 1850 reported Hannah Williamson was charged with assaulting Hannah the daughter of Thomas McLean. It was said Mrs Williamson assaulted her violently as she stood at the pump, calling her opprobrious names at the same time. Williamson said she was provoked having been called 'Mother Judas'. Williamson was fined 1s. and 11s. 6d. costs. Thomas McLean then claimed sureties of the peace from Thomas Williamson, husband of Hannah. He said that Williamson had made various threats towards him, particularly to drag him out of the house and do for him, heedless whether he met him in the house or out of it. The paper said a very rancourous feeling existed on the part of the defendant towards the complainant who both lived in the same neighbourhood of Far Gosford Street. Williamson had to find surety of £10 and keep the peace for three months.

At a densely crowded meeting of outweavers in St. Mary's Hall the *Coventry Times* 25th May 1859 reported what Thomas Mclean said to those gathered:

> [McLean] was sorry that Mr. Hart had made an attempt to alter the list…The reason for the present disturbance was because Mr Hart engaged a number of unprincipled persons to work in his factory to the annoyance of the other hands. He hoped God would forgive them (alluding to those persons) for he was sure he never would…He then referred to the important position of the working classes occupy in regard to the State. They are the soldiers and the sailors. He did not envy the upper classes, but he contended that the working classes had a right to sell their labour as dear as they could. But while he said so, he would also say that the men should not do that which is wrong. There was often a combination of working men against their fellow men. He was very sorry that Mr Hart had allowed men to work in opposition to the trade; on this account he was sorry that he [Hart] came from Belfast, - that was where his (Mr McLean's) grandfather came from. There never was a more loyal and docile people than the people of Coventry till this agitation. Mr Hart has broken his word. Is that gentlemanly? When he went to one of the strongholds of Mr Hart's influence in the country, he gave information to the police that he (McLean) should be taken if he opened his mouth. Such tyranny equalled the Emperor of Russia; the time was coming when every tyrant would be scouted from the earth. The working men of today were not the working men of twenty years ago; they are a reading and thinking people. He spoke of Sir John Dean Paul; his £100 or £500 was always ready for any charitable object, and while he was subscribing in that way he was robbing children unborn of their patrimony. He then referred to what Cobbett had said about Ireland. He said the potato was the curse of Ireland because of the insatiable Irish landlords. When the people could live on potatoes and buttermilk for 2d. a-day, the landlords thought 6d. a-day good wages. If they submitted to have the list broken, they would be brought to potatoes and buttermilk, and they would find it more difficult to get the potatoes, for at the time he referred to they were 2d. a stone and now they were 14d. He said he was 'an Irishman that had been with them 40 years, and he was jealous of their rights and liberties as any among them, and if the defence of their liberties required it, he would mount a breach with any of them,-(Loud cheers.)'

He was an active member of the 1860 strike committee; the *Coventry Herald* 14th July 1860 reported that at a public meeting of 8,000-10,000 on Greyfriars Green, McLean remarked he had to propose a resolution which was his duty to perform to his fellow-workmen when their common interests, their rights, and their liberties were at stake. There was a time when every gentleman spoke in a kind and friendly manner to his workpeople, and when the workpeople thought it an honour to assist their masters; but now the manufacturere's rule was to make a great deal of work out of his weavers for a very little money. The resolution stated the the weavers wished to meet the manufacturers to go into a revision of the List and if they refused the weavers pledged to strike.

The same edition of the paper told how Mclean said he was treated in the police office: 'one of the policeman caught him on the breast and put him aside in the most ungentlemanly manner. McLean said 'Keep those hands off me; I don't like such hands on me, and I never had them on me before'. This man told him in the presence of another policeman, 'if you say another word, I'll put you out, head foremost.' This was a Coventry policeman - some ruffian that had been imported from the rural district to do the work. He had always spoken highly of the policemen who were appointed when the police was first established. They knew the inhabitants, where they lived, their circumstances and character, and consequently allowed them to go at liberty and peace

through the town; but this ruffian threatened [him]…' McLean said he told Chief Police Superintendent who replied: 'he did not know you'. And was a man who paid the rates which helped to keep these men to be insulted and threatened because he was not known! He did not mean to let the matter rest where it was, but should hereafter take the proper means to have an enquiry into it. McLean was always a man of peace and said he always advised the weavers to keep within the law.[4]

(1) *Coventry Herald* 25th July 1851
(2) *Coventry Herald* 6th February 1852
(3) Ibid. 18th July 1851
(4) Ibid. 27th May 1859

Table A.2.2 Household Profile of Thomas McLean and of George McLean 1851

Sch/Street	Name	R to H	M C	A M	A F	Occupation	Birthplace
127 Victoria Place, Far Gosford St	Thomas McLean	Head	M	51		Rib Weaver h/loom	Dublin
	Mary Ann McLean	Wife	M		50	Silk Filler	Dublin
	Mary Ann McLean	Dau			23	Rib Weaver h/loom	Coventry
	Jane McLean	Dau			19	Rib Weaver h/loom	Coventry
	Thomas McLean	Son		17		Rib Weaver h/loom	Coventry
	Eliza McLean	Dau			14	Silk Filler	Coventry
	Anna McLean	Dau			11	Silk Filler	Coventry
	John Atkins	Nephew		18		Rib Weaver h/loom	Dublin
	Jane Bradshaw	Visitor [S-i-L]			31	Dressmaker	Dublin
134 Victoria Place, Far Gosford St	George McLean	Head	M	28		Rib Weaver h/loom	Dublin
	Catherine McLean	Wife	M		19	Rib Weaver h/loom	Coventry
	Maryan McLean	Dau			2		Coventry

The McLeans came from Dublin in 1826 (between birth of George and Mary Ann) and were still working as hand loom weavers at mid-century. The scant wages and the pressure to make ends meet in Coventry from this method of weaving can be sensed in his letter of 6th February 1852. Thomas was located in Preston in 1861 while George had moved to Derby c1856. It is possible that Mary Ann died in 1866 and Thomas died 1867 after both returned to Dublin. They were Dissenters (Appendix 10); his son Thomas (1834-1902) was baptised in Holy Trinity in 1834. This son remained in Coventry as a silk weaver, married Martha Watts from Stoke in 1857, and they were found with their children in Coventry in 1871. They named one of their children Thomas (Henry) (1858-1938) and he was found in 1911 as a fitter in a cycle manufactory.

HO107/2068.436.30 ED 1v; HO107/2068.437.32 ED 1v; RG9/2497.39.32 ED 14; RG9/3139.135.62 ED 60; RG10/3180.42.9 ED 12; RG14/18554.124 ED 16

Denis McVeagh (1824-1913)

Denis Ignatius McVeagh was born in Dublin in 1824 and baptised in St. Mary's pro-Cathedral on 25th May 1824. The *UK Medical Registers 1859-1959* in 1903 records his qualifications as Lic. Fac. Phys. Surg. Glasg., 1852. Lic. 1860, Mem. 1880, K. Q. Coll, Phys. Irel. In January and March 1851 he was mentioned as assistant surgeon to Dr William Roden in Kidderminster. He was appointed to the Coventry Provident Dispensary in March 1853. On 20th June 1855 he married his Kidderminster fiancee Martha Dixon, daughter of H.J. Dixon who was a well-placed carpet manufacturer. In 1861 he appears as a Physican and Surgeon in Hale Street. In 1871 he resided at 33

Bishop Street and by 1881 had moved to the more upmarket 8 Warwick Row; the following year he became a Justice of the Peace. In 1891 he was a City Magistrate and had moved to 3 Quadrant – one of the most stylish addresses in Coventry. In 1901 he resided at 22 Queens Road. His long attendance at the the Dispensary did not end amicably. A dispute arose between the Dispensary Committee and the some members of the medical staff as to whether the former or the latter should decide on employment conditions. Three doctors freshly appointed by the committee were boycotted by the medical profession. (One of the doctors was Andrew St. Lawrance Burke (1869-1941) from Roscommon. See this Appendix). McVeagh sided with the stand of the Committee and was expelled from the medical division of doctors in Coventry. He would write to the *Herald* 20th December 1907:

> 'I have not committed a felony. I have always paid my debts. I have never knowingly, been guilty of an unprofessional act. I have received many honours and uniform kindnessess, socially and financially, from my fellow citizens. Little did I dream that I should, after fifty-four years residence in the city of my adoption, be so cruelly treated by my own profession, a few of whom I did think were 'true' friends, and now my heinous crime and disgraceful act, which prevents my sitting in the same medical division, is:- 'I refuse to surrender my Dispensary appointment, from which the main support of my family is derived (a hopelessy invalided wife being one) at the bidding of the British Medical Association and the Coventry division!'[His brackets around remarks about his wife]

He resigned from the Dispensary in November 1909 and took up residence at 47 Priory Road in Kenilworth. He died in 1913 aged 89 and is buried in Kenilworth. He was a Unionist and an ardent Catholic - a combination that was not common to Irish-born.
From the *Tablet* 29th November 1913:

> 'We regret to record the Death of Dr. Denis Ignatius McVeagh, which took place on November 14, at Twyford Abbey, near Willesden. He was the oldest living pupil of the great Jesuit College at Clongowes wood, in Ireland. For fifty-seven years he practiced his profession with devotion and success in Coventry and among the Catholic families of the county of Warwick. After fifty years of service at Coventry Dispensary he was presented with a testimonial from his fellow citizens. Dr. McVeagh took an active interest in the affairs of the city and was held in high esteem socially. He was appointed a Justice of the Peace for Coventry in 1882, and held several important appointments in the city. He was a prominent worker for the Benedictine Church of St. Osburgh. The funeral took place at St. Austin's, Kenilworth, on the Wednesday of last week. Requiem Mass was said by the Very Rev. Father Fowler (Prior of Belmont), in the presence of a large gathering of clergy, relations and friends. The Prior of Belmont spoke from the text:, "Whether we live, or whether we die, we are the Lord's" Dr McVeagh (he said), was born a Catholic, lived a Catholic and died a Catholic at the age of ninety years. Dr McVeagh was an example of how a Catholic layman ought to live and how he ought to die. –R.I.P.'

On his death it was said of him in the *Herald* 21st November 1913:

> 'In social life Dr. McVeagh was a general favourite; he always presented a genial and sunny front. He had a fund of numerous anecdotes, in which the characteristics of his own part of the United Kingdom were well represented. At a ripe age he could take part in a charitable entertainment and sing an Irish song in character.'

HO107/2038.41.18 ED 1b
Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1855, Warwickshire, Holy Trinity p. 47
Worcestershire Chronicle 8th January 1851, 12th March 1851
Coventry Herald 1st April 1853

RG9/2207.49.27 ED 11
RG10/3182.27.4 ED 24
RG11/3067.68.18 ED 14
RG12/2449.155.8 ED 14
RG13/2907.147.17 ED 17
Coventry Herald 5th April, 20th December 1907, 6th June 1908
Coventry Evening Telegraph 10th November 1909
RG14/18764 ED 9
Leamington Spa Courier 21st November 1913

James R Mills (1852-1909)

Born in Ireland, he was in 1881 a Curate of St. James Norwich. By 1891 he was Vicar of St. Michael's and lived at the vicarage in Warwick Road with his Bermudian-born wife and Coventry born daughter of 2 years. The family had moved to Gedney in Lincolnshire by 1900. He died there in January 1909.

RG12/2449.156.9 ED 14
RG11/1941.74.27 ED 18
RG13/3036.90.3 ED 17
Boston Guardian 30th January 1909

William Beattie Monahan (1867-1948)

He was born in Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal in October 1867. His father was a Methodist Minister and he became one himself. He studied in Trinity College, Dublin. He became a Church of England priest in 1895. He served in two Birmingham parishes before becoming a curate at St. Michael's Coventry. He resided with his wife and daughter at 13 Priory Row in 1901, and the following year he moved to St. Swithun's Worcester.

Father Monahan Archive Ministry booklet. Accessed through Ancestry.com, 'Public Member Stories, Memories & Histories' for William Beattie Monahan.
RG13/2912.183.21 ED 27
England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, Worcestershire, Vol. 9d p. 222

Henry Edmund Moore (1824-1899)

Born in Ingham, Lincolnshire he was clothed in Downside in 1843 where he took the name Edmund. Following his profession in 1845 he showed signs of consumption. He travelled to Australia where his health improved so much that he returned to Downside in 1849. He was ordained in 1853 and in 1859 arrived in Coventry. In the city he showed zeal in collecting alms in order to purchase land for the new convent and school in Raglan Street. He acted as chaplain to the nuns for many years. In 1872 he became incumbent of St. Osburg's. As such, Pereira, a fellow resident and his obituarist, said 'he was more than ever beloved by his assistant priests; he was a father to them'. He was according to Pereira worshipped by the sick and poor when he visited them. In 1883 he resigned his rectorship when he was installed as Provincial of the South Province but continued to reside in the Priory of St. Osburg's until 1891. Following the abolition of the office of Provincial in 1891 he became chaplain to the nuns in Mayfield, East Sussex, where he remained until 1898 when he moved to St. Mary's, Much Woolton, Lancashire, where he spent his final nine months. This move was probably at the invitation of Antonio Pereira his old friend from his Coventry years, who was resident from 1897 to 1909 in Much Woolton. Moore died on 19th February 1899. The general opinion was that he was devoted and holy, filled with simplicity, charity and innocence, and was a sweet, gentle, saintly monk.

RG10/3177.82.21 ED 27
RG12/2450.155.33 ED 26
Ambrose Pereira, The Late Abbot Moore, *Downside Review*, Vol. 18, (1899) pp. 178-181
https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=wu.89081868747;view=1up;seq=243 Accessed 16th January 2019

Patrick Mortimer (1845-1911)

The *Coventry Standard* 11th November 1870 told how Patrick Mortimer, an Irish labourer was charged with being drunk and disorderly and looking for fight outside the Pilgrim public house, 6 Ironmonger Row. He was described as an old offender; however he was merely 25 years of age at that time according to the next census. He was a Mayo-born, unmarried bricklayer, lodging with fellow county man Austin Ryan and family at 33 New Buildings.[1] Both were part of a group of 'Five Irishmen' who were charged with being drunk and riotous in Spon Street as reported in the *Standard* 20th June 1873. In January 1880 he married Catherine Devine, daughter of Cicely Burke, the 80 year old widow who ran a lodging house with 11 lodgers at H4C4 Palmer Lane in 1881. The lodgers' origin and occupations showed that this house, in this lane in 1881, represented both a reception area and 'Irish' locus for poor working Irish.[2] Cicely passed away before 1891 when Patrick and Catherine provided boarding to 7 lodgers.[3] In 1901 Patrick was described as a common lodging house keeper at H2C2 White Friars Lane, and with Catherine kept 15 lodgers.[4] Patrick and Catherine were both recorded in the workhouse in 1911. He died the same year aged 66.[6]

(1) RG10/3180.8.9 ED10
(2) *Coventry Times* 28th January 1880; RG11/3072.29.16 ED 9
(3) RG12/2453.30.6 ED 7
(4) RG13/2906.92.3 ED 6
(5) RG14/18538.12 ED 29
(6) England & Wales Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915, Warickshire, Vol. 6d p. 553

Charles Murray (1850-1932)

At the annual meeting of the Coventry Branch of the Irish National League, held in the George Hotel in Little Park Street in September 1888 Charles was appointed president.[1] According to the census of 1851 Charles was the baby son of Charles Murray, 33 years, an Irish bricklayers labourer residing in 8C Lench Street, Birmingham. Given that he was British-born but not in Coventry it is to be noticed he would not have come to the attention of this study via the Coventry census. His Irish-born mother Bridget was also 33 years.[2] In 1871 he was an engine fitter in Wolverhampton where he met Mary his wife.[3] They had returned to Birmingham by the mid-1870s.[4] In 1891 he resided as an iron turner at 44 Arthur Street, Coventry, with Mary and family.[5] However in July 1895 he was described as a grocer and provision dealer.[6] He had arrived in Coventry from Birmingham about 1881 according to the birthplace and age (11) of his daughter Sarah. His older daughter Catherine was 16 years. She married William Underhill, a Coventry-born cycle metal fitter about 1896.[7] In July 1887 Charles pleaded guilty when summoned by PC Mills to fighting with John Ellis in Stoney Stanton Road. However he was separately summoned by John's wife Mary Ann Ellis who complained at the end of the fight when she went to comfort her husband who was lying insensible on the ground against some palings that Murray deliberately kicked her in the ribs, causing great pain. Although Murray refuted her account he was found guilty 'of a most cowardly and aggravated assault and fined 20s. and costs'.[8] In June 1898 he was summoned by Helen Underhill, Catherine's mother-in-law who alleged that Charles struck her son in the ribs and kicked herself on the leg, besides 'chucking her into the street,' and used bad threats towards William and herself. William who also summoned Murray corroborated saying Murray tried to strangle him and threatened to dash his brains out. Kate stated that her husband 'was in beer at the time, put his foot on the sixteen month old child's stomach, and sent it across the kitchen, and also struck her three times in the face'. After a long hearing which included the calling of witnesses who spoke of Underhill's intoxication and violence, Murray was fined 2s.6d twice and costs, for assaulting both Underhills while William was fined 40s. for the 'very dastardly assault on his wife'.[9] In July 1899 Charles when passing on a bus saw a four year old Henry Eadon struggling in the canal

and jumping into the water saved him as he was going under the second time.[10] Mary died in Jan-Feb-Mar 1899 aged 46 and in Apr-May-Jun of the following year he married Coventry-born widow Hannah Higgitt.[11] In 1901 at 33 Jordan Well, age 48, he was a cycle turner married to Hannah who was 10 years younger.[12] In 1911 he still resided there as a shopkeeper (confectioner) assisted by his wife.[13] He died in December 1932.[14]

(1) *Coventry Herald* 21st September 1888
(2) HO107/2057.392.40 ED 15
(3) RG10/2939.26.9 ED 24
(4) RG11/3002.10.14 ED 63
(5) RG12/2455.96.24 ED 20
(6) *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 9th July 1895
(7) RG13/2911.85.12 ED 13
(8) *Coventry Herald* 22nd July 1887
(9) *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 9th June 1898
(10) *Coventry Herald* 21st July 1899
(11) England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1899, Warwickshire, Vol. 6d p. 332; England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1900 Warwickshire, Vol. 6d p. 1017
(12) RG13/2906.110.40 ED 6
(13) RG14/18515.287 ED 5
(14) England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1932, Warwickshire, Vol. 6d p. 799

James Murray (1831-1863)

The *Coventry Herald* 30th October 1863 wrote:

'Today we record, with sincere regret, the death of Mr. Murray. One who has left his impress upon our city demands of us more than the passing notice of our obituary column. James Murray was born at Armagh on 9th December 1831. Early displaying the bent of his mind, he was in 1845 articled to Mr. W. Scott, architect, of Liverpool. When he left the office of that gentleman, he commenced practicing his profession in the same town, in partnership with Mr. Barry. When the partnership was dissolved, Mr. Murray took that share of the business lying in this neighbourhood, and settled in Coventry. While here his talents quickly brought him into general notice, and the Royal Institute of British Architects, on the proposition of Mr. G. Gilbert Scott and Mr. P. Harwick, elected him a fellow. This was, we believe, in 1856. He was then the youngest man who had the honour of Fellowship. Having moved to London, he, in connection with Mr. E. Welby Pugin, executed many important works both here and on the continent. But Pugin and Murray were each too fit to lead, to work together harmoniously. Accordingly, dissolving the partnership, Mr Murray returned to Coventry. And here, at the early age of 32 years, he died in our midst, on Saturday last. Born an artist, and having an intuitive perception of the beautiful and true, he had by study brought these natural instincts under the subjection of his will, so as to be ever available and ready. Naturally gifted with great mental power so well in hand, as to be able to solve complicated constructional problems, and think out the details of a plan with little aid from paper. It was thus his habit to design, and by mastering the difficulties of his work as they arose, he was enabled to perform large designs in an incredibly short space of time. The whole was clearly pictured in his own mind, and what that mind conceived his ready hand could always truly translate. With so good a taste, so trained a mind, and so cunning a hand, what wonder that he was a great architect? We confess that in his classic work we always fancy that we miss the ease and repose of his power; for his was essentially a Gothic style. In this he worked by intuition and *con amore*, in that by study and according to rule. His taste was guided by the same true impulses as those of the old masters of his art – he did not so much follow them as go with them. And in restoring their works it seemed as if, being actuated by their spirit, he could not go wrong. In

Coventry and its neighbourhood we surely do not require to bring evidence to bear out these remarks. James Murray has left his mark here as no man has left it since the old time when Coventry skill and Coventry piety raised our noble Churches. That he conscientiously discharged his duties as an architect we well know, but we do not write to record that. We all do, or ought to do, our duty. But has any other man of 32 years ever done to illustrate Coventry as he has? And done it under such difficulties? The best part of his life was spent in battling resistless disease, and for our part we almost think that his harassed body reacted upon his mind in such sort as partly to account for the success of his short career, - as if the same process that was wearing away the vital energy was making the intellect more bright and keen. Not only by his friends - to whom he had endeared himself by his good heart, his genial temperament, and his lively wit - but by all his fellow-citizens, he will not be soon forgotten. Measured by time his life has indeed been short, but reckoned by results, how few of us may hope to reach his years. He is gone from us, but his works will long live after him. 'Dead he is not, but departed; for the artist never dies.' Mr. Murray was attended to the grave by numerous mourning friends, amongst whom was Mr. E. Welby Pugin, his late partner, who travelled express from Belgium to pay this last tribute of respect to one he valued very highly.'

In Coventry he designed the Justice Rooms and the Corn Exchange in 1856. He was recorded at 5 Warwick Road in 1861 with his Chesire-born wife and 3 young children. He died on 24th October 1863. See Figure 3.10.

RG9/2203.23.13 ED 18

Dictionary of National Biography Vol. 13, (Oxford 1921) p. 1274 Accessed on Ancestry.com 29th January 2019

John O'Donnell (1852-1911+)

In 1861 John, aged 9 years, lived at 2 Gosford Street with his widowed, 31 year old, mother, Johannah, who was a washerwoman. Also residing were his two sisters Bridget and Ellen, 7 and 5 years respectively, all of whom were described inacurately as Dublin-born. The 1871 census was more revealing; the family was now living in H2C30 Much Park Street where Johanna was described as a laundress from Newport, Co. Limerick, and John was a watch engraver from Nenagh, Co. Tipperary. The only sister mentioned was Bridget who was a dressmaker from Tynemouth, Northumberland. John and his mother were all that remained in the same house in 1881; John was now an 'engraver (gold)' and both were called Irish-born. John's father, Patrick was a soldier who fell in the Crimean War. On 13th February 1886 the half-yearly branch meeting of the Land League was held in the Pheasant Inn, Well Street which was chaired by the vice-president P. McDonnell and J. Duffy as secretary. Carried unanimously was the motion that the expulsion of the president be published in the national press. Presumably this referred to O'Donnell. Appendix 9 suggests a reason for the expulsion. In 1901 he would appear to be living in Rugby.

RG9/2201.46.2 ED 4
RG10/3175.100.8 ED 8
RG11/3066.107.8 ED 8
RG13/2916.15.22 ED 16

Antonio Francisco Pereira (1839-1923)

He was born in Calcutta in 1839 and was ordained in Downside in 1866. His silver jubilee was celebrated in St. Osburg's on 9th May 1882. After Mass 'the school children offered their tribute of affection to Father Ambrose'. It was said of him that 'He had for years taken them under his special care; had built their schools, was constantly in the midst of them, had watched the progress of each one, [and] had so completely identified

himself with their welfare…' During an after-dinner speech his 'devotion to the Benedictine order and his labours for religion' were remarked on.

In 1896 Fr Pereira moved to Much Woolton in Lancashire where he was joined in 1898 by his old, now fading friend Edmund Moore for the final nine months of his life. Pereira was known for his simplicity and devotion but also for his ready wit and keen comprehension. He was bright, vivacious and energetic and 'his personal interest and sympathy…won him the confidence and affection of very many' in Coventry. In 1911 he resided at St. Edmund's, St. Mary's Street, Bungay, Suffolk. The *Tablet* 3rd November 1923 reported Father Pereira died in Westcliff-On-Sea on 23rd October 1923 aged 85 years.

Silver Jubilee of Fathers Green and Pereira, *Downside Review*, Vol. 1, (July 1882) pp. 455-458
RG14/10995.83 ED 2

Edward Petre (1831-1902)

The Petres were recognised as Catholic families from the seventeenth century. London-born Edward Petre bought Whitley Abbey in 1858 from the Hood family.[1] It must have been hugely satisfying to the local clergy to have a distinguished upper-class family in their midst. Petre represented the 'Roman Catholic element' on the Education Board set up in 1870. The *Coventry Herald* 2nd December 1870 referred to him as a cultured gentleman whose 'co-religionists could have found no better exponent of their principles'. Petre, to most people's surprise, lost his place on the Board by a mere fifteen votes in 1873.[2] In 1891 he employed eight servants.[3] A Mr Allchurch giving his testimony of respect on the death of Mr Petre was reported by the *Coventry Telegraph* 26th November 1902 as saying 'the deceased gentleman had told him after first becoming a member of the Board that the Poor Law work had opened up to him a new seam of life; previously he had not the remotest idea how the poor in large towns lived'. He married his Leamington-born wife in 1857.[4] Lady Gwendeline was associated with the development of Raglan Street Church and purchased its altar. She died in 1910 aged 75 years.

(1) Kelly's, *Directory*, 1888
(2) *Coventry Herald* 5th December 1873
(3) RG12/2449.181.9 ED 16
(4) England and Wales Civil registration Marriage Index, Warwickshire, Vol. 6d p. 625

Ralph Ephrem Pratt (1802-1875)

Ephrem Pratt was from Richmond in Yorkshire. He served in Knaresborough from 1830-38, then in Liverpool until 1840 and spent the next ten years in Redditch before arriving in Coventry in 1850.[1]

Fr Pratt was 73 years of age when he died. At a requiem mass, the *Coventry Herald* 11th June 1875 reported that it was said of him: 'In character he was eminently pious, and devotedly attached to the church which he served. Although a man of fine sensibilities, and of such acute sympathies that he had been known many times to weep at distress, he was robust and vigorous in mind and body, and if there was one thing he detested more than another, it was canting hypocrisy. He was straightforward, honest, and honourable, and he was a thorough Englishman, or rather a thorough Yorkshireman, as he was justly proud of his native county. He was well known and universally beloved and respected, not only by the members of the church to which he belonged, but by the inhabitants of the city generally.'

(1) Obit book of the English Benedictines from 1600 to 1912 : being the necrology of the English congregation of the order of St. Benedict from 1600 to 1883 / compiled by Abbot Snow ; rev., enl. and continued by Dom Henry Norbert Birt.
http://hdl.handle.net/2027/wu.89081868747?urlappend=%3Bseq=216 Accessed 16th January 2019

William Rice (1858-1912)

In 1891 William R. Rice was enumerated in the census as an unmarried 33 year old Irish-born general practitioner residing in Gosford Terrace (Then on the eastern edge of the city. At no 7, Irish-born Samuel Dunlop Adams {See above} was licensee of the White Lion; St. Joseph's Convent was also on the Terrace.). His connections to Ireland prior to this appearance are not known. Life was pleasant among his social circle. The *Coventry Herald* 24th March 1893 contained an advertisement for the Annual Ball of the Stoke Lawn Tennis Club in St. Mary's. Dr Rice was treasurer of the club and of the 27 stewards listed, 6 were doctors including himself and Dr McVeagh. In September 1897 he married Ethel Mary Evans in Edgbaston church, his father Robert who was a Church of England clergyman officiated. Ethel's father was a master miller in Aston who employed 30 in 1881. His son John F. Evans together with W. Pridmore and Dr Eric Pridmore, who in all probability were related to Ethel's mother, were on the list of 27 stewards. In 1901 he was recorded as Wm Richardson Rice, age 42, and married to Ethel Mary, 35 years, from Aston Brook, Warwickshire. He died aged 53 in 1912. Ethel wrote a remark on her 1911 census return indicating her suffragist sympathies: 'I give this information under protest not being considered a person in the eyes of the law'. Ethel stated in 1925 that her late husband was 'keenly interested in Socialism in the days when that meant the loss of kudos and patients. He invited well-known Labour speakers who addressed Sunday meetings in Coventry to stop with him'. The situation of Ethel reminds that the 'Irish association' of a widowed English person once married to an Irish-born (and their British born children) is no longer apparent in normal trawls of individual censuses taken after the Irish-born has died.

RG12/2455.75.36 ED 19
England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1898, (Edgbaston, St. Bartholomew) DRO 53 M152
RG11/3042.7.8 ED 29
RG13/2912.107.8 ED 24
RG14/18513.424 ED 3
Portsmouth Evening News 16th December 1925

Basil Riley (1855-1936)

Born in Ashton-under-Lyne (or in Salford) he was son of Michael Riley an Irish-born tailor and draper in Manchester.[1] In 1881 Basil resided in Coventry as a master tailor employing 10 men and 2 women. He resided with a sister, two brothers and Mary Doran 31 (daughter of Patrick Doran (1819-1877). See Appendix 12) who was a general servant.[2] He had an outlet in Hertford Street and would appear to have benefitted from being in a position to supply military uniforms during WW1.[3] In 1911 he resided at Middleborough House, Radford Road.[4] He was in 1916 a director of Riley Ltd. which produced motor cars.[5]

(1) RG9/2954.106.12 ED 20
(2) RG11/3073.20.3 ED 16
(3) *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 11th June 1915
(4) RG14/18541.75 ED 3
(5) *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 28th December 1916

John Rogers (1817-1890)

He was a ribbon manufacturer born in Weston, Warwickshire and had no Irish background. He was mentioned as one of the founding council members of the Catholic Young Men's Society in March 1858. However he recognised a marketing opportunity and he placed an advertisement in the *Catholic Telegraph* 19th March 1864: 'To Catholic Young Men's Societies. Now selling, a most beautiful Ribbon Portrait of the Very Rev. Dr. O'Brien, founder of the above Society, suitable for members to wear when approaching to Holy Communion in a body…Also a beautiful Picture of St. Patrick, suitable for framing, or wearing upon Scarfs….Manufactured by John Rogers,

the only Catholic Manufacturer in the City of Coventry…Convents supplied with ribbons.' (See Figure A.2.1). In 1851 he hired a 16 year old Irish-born apprentice and in 1861 he employed a 15 year old Irish-born domestic servant.

The exigencies of that decade in Coventry become apparent when an advertisement appeared in the *Coventry Standard* 8th December 1865, that on the instruction of John Rogers, who was giving up the occupation of the factory, his eleven superior A La Bar looms and other frames and machines would be auctioned. In 1871 at 54 years he was to be found as a shopkeeper at 66 Butts. He died in 1890 and an executor of his will was William McGowran who was also on the commencing council of the CYMS in 1858. Friendships made then could endure for a lifetime.

RG10/3177.119.13 ED 30

England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations) 1890 p. 275

John Simpson (1845-1910)

He appeared in Class 2 in both 1891 and 1901 (Chapter 6). Born in Ireland he was recorded in Birmingham aged 26 years with brother Thomas aged 16 years, both drapers in 1871.[1] In 1881 he resided in Holyhead Road with his Birmingham-born wife Janet and stated that he was a draper employing 13 hands.[2] In 1891 he resided at 2 Queens Road with a new wife Lizzie.[3] In 1901 he resided at 2 Stoneleigh Terrace.[4] He died in 1910 aged 64.[5] He owned a prominent business in the centre of Coventry, as the insertion in the town directory indicates.

'John Simpson, wholesale & retail linen & woollen draper, silk mercer, hosier & glover & haberdasher, ribbons, flowers, corsets, mantles, jackets &c. family mourning & funerals, carpet factor & house furnisher, china, glass & earthenware, 5,6,7,8,9,10,11 & 12 Earl St.'[6]

(1) RG10/3100.129.5 ED 23
(2) RG11/3069.36.30 ED 27
(3) RG12/2451.75.2 ED 33
(4) RG13/2907.145.13 ED 17
(5) England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1910, (Apr-May-Jun), Warwickshire 6d p. 236
(6) Kelly's, *Directory of Warwickshire*, (London 1896) p. 94

Finlay Sinclair (1858-1937)

John Boyd Dunlop had invented the pneumatic tyre by 1887. He collaborated with Finlay Sinclair and R.W. Edlin, who built bicycles with frames suitable for his fatter tyres.[1] Sinclair was from Ballywilliam, Co. Antrim. In 1891 he was described as a cycle manufacturer in Coventry.[2] In 1901 he was director of Preston Davies Rubber Tyre Co. and he resided at 12 Stonleigh Terrace, with his Belfast born wife.[3] In 1911 he had moved to Erdington, Birmingham.[4] He died in Sheffield in 1937.[5]

(1) Carlton Reid, *Roads Were Not Built for Cars*, (Washington 2015) p. 23
(2) RG12/2453.68.47 ED 8
(3) RG13/2907.146.15 ED 17
(4) RG14/18323.195 ED 4
(5) England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1937, Sheffield, West Yorkshire 9c p. 330

Thomas Cuthbert Smith (1815-1884)

He was born in Fishwick near Preston. He entered Downside when he was fourteen where he was known for his earnestness and 'downright' character. He was professed in 1836 and ordained in 1844. He served briefly in Coventry before 1846, and returned again to the city between 1856 and 1859. He left to become Prior of Downside which position he resigned from in 1866 on becoming Provincial of Canterbury. He returned to Coventry between 1870 and 1872. Failing health compelled him to retire to Downside in 1881. He served in Coventry at a time when his observations on the Irish or Catholics therein would have been useful, but sadly there are none recorded.

Downside Review, Vol. 3, 1, (1884) pp. 209-211.

Ralph Smyth (1826-1883)

He was described as 'not born in Warwickshire' in 1841, but neither was he specifically recorded as Irish-born. In the 1871 census he was given as born in Coventry. However, since in 1851, 1861 and in 1881 he was listed as Irish-born, he was regarded as Irish-born for 1871.[1] Ralph Smith was a 15 year apprentice painter to Irish-born James Connor in Coventry in 1841. In 1848 he married his Coventry-born wife Susannah whose father was a pawnbroker in Much Park Street. He died on 12 January 1883 at the age of 57, and was then described as a dealer in fine arts, carver and gilder and clothier, leaving a very significant personal estate of £20,042 3s 3d.[2] He was the apprentice that lifted James Connor into Class 2 in 1851 (Table 5.25). In 1861 Connor stated he was born in 'Barony of Maryborough while Smyth revealed in 1881 that he was born in Queens Co., thus proving the county of origin link between them. Interestingly during a fruitless search to locate James Connor in 1871, it emerged his Coventry-born daughter Elizabeth married James B.B. Frost a designer draughtsman from Ireland who was living in Coventry in 1861. They had moved to Birmingham circa 1867 where living with them was house painter John H Connor (brother of Elizabeth) and Anna Marie Turner (married sister of Elizabeth) both Coventry-born. This vignette tells of continued links through marriage that could exist between Irish-born and second-generation Coventry-born. It provides an uncommonly available insight into the experience of a second-generation female on marriage name-change, and that Birmingham was a destination for Coventry-Irish in the 1860s.

(1) RG10/3091.109.53 ED 15

(2) England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1883 p. 96

Ernest A Stephens (1873-1928)

He was born in Clontarf, Dublin 13th November 1873.[1] In 1901 he was manager of a pneumatic tyre works and he resided at 4 Melville Road, Coventry with his Birmingham born wife, Coventry-born daughter and 1 servant.[2] In 1911 he was an 'India rubber manufacturer – manager' and was resident in 13 Merrion View Avenue, Dublin with his family and a servant. They emigrated to the United States in 1912.[4] He died 9th October 1928 in Buffalo, New York.[5]

(1) Ancestry.com. *Ireland, Select Births and Baptisms, 1620-1911* [database on-line]. Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011. FHL Film Number 571399

(2) RG13/2908.67.30 ED 21

(3) National Archives of Ireland, http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Dublin/Pembroke_East/Merrion_View_Avenue/38582 Accessed 29th Janaury 2019

(4) UK, Outward Passenger Lists, Liverpool, December 1912

(5) Ancestry.com, https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/113735135/person/110124268301/story?_phsrc=BSC4284&_phstart=successSource Accessed 17th January 2019

Albert Samuel Tomson (1833-1904)

He was born in Radford. His first wife, who he married in 1857, was Elizabeth Backhouse (1831-1861), Dublin-born of English parents. Known as Lizzie Stuart she was a well known public singer - called the 'singing professor' - and had entertained as far away as London. Following her death aged 30 years in November 1861, he married the widow of his next door neighbour. He was Mayor of Coventry on eight occasions, during the 1890s and in 1901 and 1902.

RG9/2204.28.31 ED 26

Coventry Standard 9th November 1861

Benjamin Burland Tuke (1870-1936)

He was born in Dublin and played international rugby for Ireland on nine occasions between 1890 and 1895.[1] His father was an accountant who lived at 14 Clare Street, Dublin.[2] He was an 11 year old student with his two brothers in Ash Furlong Hall Classical School, Sutton Coldfield in 1881.[3] He relocated to Coventry in 1896. In 1901 he was a 'pneumatic tyre manufacturer' living in The Limes, Warwick Road with his wife and brother, both Dublin-born and his Coventry-born daughter who was baptised in Holy Trinity 30th August 1900. He had three servants.[4] In 1903 he joined the St. John's Lodge of the Freemasons in Coventry.[5] He was living in Sherbourne House, Whitley in 1911 as a 'Rubber manufacturer–Tyres', with his wife, his daughter, her governess and three servants.[6] As a widower he remarried on 30th June 1920. He then described himself as a jeweller residing at 1 Hyde Park Place, London.[7] He died in Chelsea on 4th June 1936.[8]

(1) ESPN, http://en.espn.co.uk/ireland/rugby/player/941.html Accessed 16th January 2019
(2) National Archives of Ireland, http://www.willcalendars.nationalarchives.ie/reels/cwa/005014911/005014911_00544.pdf Accessed 16th January 2019
(3) RG11/3051.69.12 ED 8
(4) RG13/2907.139.2 ED17; Church of England Baptisms, 1900 (Coventry, Holy Trinity) Warwickshire Anglican Registers, Engl 09000/27 DR 581/14
(5) United Grand Lodge of England Freemason Membership Registers, 1751-1921.
(6) RG14/18537.25 ED 27
(7) Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1920, (Westminster, St. John Paddington) London Metropolitan Archives p87/jne/o2o
(8) Church of England Death and Burials, 1936, (Harrow, Little Stanmore) dro/109/029

William Bernard Ullathorne (1806-1889)

In 1841 he became rector in Coventry.[1] He left in June 1846 after being appointed Vicar Apostolic of the Western District. Later he became bishop of the Central District in 1847 and Bishop of Birmingham in 1850. He was the only English bishop to write an autobiography, and the only priest to write about time spent in Coventry; a time particularly relevant to heavy Irish migrant arrival and adjustment. A widely travelled, gruff, Yorkshire man, he had gone to sea as a youth and later became a Benedictine monk. At twenty eight he had become vicar-general for Australia and served there for eight years. He was aware of the many Irish among those removed to Australia. He was familiar with Ireland as he visited Ireland in order to interest the Sisters of Charity in establishing in Australia, and while in Ireland he visited Maynooth seeking priests for his mission in Sydney.[2] On a tour he made through the south of Ireland, he had a meeting in Cork with Fr Theobald Mathew who promoted temperance, and then he journeyed to scenic Killarney.

(1) Champ, *William Bernard Ullathorne*, p. 90
(2) Butler, *Life of Bishop Ullathorne*, Vol. 2 p. 143

Appendix 3

Hill Street

This street serves as an example of an 'ordinary' street, different from streets mentioned that captivate attention because of an Irish reputation or numerical impact. There was not an intensity of Irish presence in Hill Street even though on it was located the Catholic Church. The building was sited at the 'countryside' end of Hill Street and did not have in its immediate vicinity the type of courtyards that would have attracted the Irish. The Irish only found these at the 'city-end' of Hill Street. The street was examined and the result is outlined in Table A.3.1. What is indicated is a substantial presence of Irishcom in the street by 1841 (16 Irish-Born/32 Irishcom), evidence of lodging activity, and the involvement of families in the silk trade. The presence of some core nuclear families and the variety and complexity of household composition is apparent. To be noticed is that Irish women were employed by Coventrian families as servants and that second generation Irish - even those born in Ireland were occupied in Coventry manufacturing. The 18 year old son of George Clarke the tailor was a watch finisher. John Sullivan the agricultural labourer had three sons aged 17, 15 and 13, two of whom were watchmaker's apprentices while the third worked in a factory. There were few labourers recorded, in contrast to their significant presence e.g. in the dilapidated conditions of Palmer Lane or West Orchard. For those Irishcom in Hill Street the success of the silk industry was as crucial to them as to Coventrians. In such a street it is difficult to see the Irish who were employed as servants, or had local spouses, or children in the silk or watch making industries as not locally tolerated. It lends to the belief that a contemporary distinction could be made between those Irish who engaged in activity that was seen as normal for Coventrians and had some traction in the city, and those Irish who retained for longer their own norms and Irish attributed occupations. In so doing they could be separately distinguished as 'low' Irish. Obvious too, is the frequent movement of families and usually the short-distances involved. The number of Irishcom households at 10 in 1841 and 12 in 1851, reduced substantially to 4 in 1861 and 5 in 1871. Of itself Hill Street indicates an Irish transience possibly accelerated by the collapse of the silk trade in 1860. However sadly it is not readily possible to ascertain if the same level of alternation was also a feature of the native households in Hill Street.

Table A.3.1 Settlement and Pattern of movement in Hill Street 1841-1871
All mentioned were Irish-born unless otherwise indicated.

1841
The residents in Hill Street with Irish association in 1841included: James Roe, a 45 year old labourer and his Coventrian wife; Henry Fleetwood, a 30 year old silk throwster with his Warwickshire wife and family, together with Richard Fleetwood, a 25 year old ribbon weaver and 4 males; Michael Hare, a 40 year old weaver lodging with a native cordwainer's family; Philip Stewart, a 35 year old box maker with his wife and Coventrian baby daughter, and five lodgers, 2 of which were Irish - John Macintyre a 25 year old agricultural labourer and John Brazell a 40 year old weaver; Thomas Harris, a 30 year old ribbon weaver with his Warwickshire wife and their 4 Warwickshire born children. Residing with them was Jane Green aged 50 and her 3 offspring again all Warwickshire born; Catherine Hoggins, a 61 year old silk winder, her daughter Elizabeth Hoggins, a 31 year old weaver, and also Susannah Parker, a 21 year old native

weaver. In 1851 Catherine referred to now as Higgins was located at (60) Fleet Street HO107/2067.550.12 ED 27 and had 4 female native lodgers all throwsters; John Dwyer, a 40 year old ribbon weaver, his wife Mary and 5 Warwickshire-born children of whom the eldest was 12 years suggesting John arrived in Coventry before 1830. They had moved to (27) Bishop Street by 1851 HO107/2068.105.8 ED 1e with a further child. Those in the family who worked, were employed as hand loom ribbon weavers or winders; Isabella Sly, a 20 year old charwoman lodged with a native 45 year old charwoman; Catherine Sanders, a 62 year old filler lodged with a native 60 year old female; James Boyle a 40 year old cutler lodged, along with 2 natives, with a 72 year old female innkeeper and her son. Finally in 1841 Fr Robert Pope HO107/1152 Book 13.17.27 ED 27 a non-Warwickshire born priest is mentioned at the Catholic chapel, together with a female 'Ind' and a female servant who were both English. Fr Pope was dying and the female may have been a nurse or a schoolteacher.

1851

In 1851 at (110) Hill Street, Fr Ralph Pratt, born in Richmond, Yorkshire and Fr Henry Sutton, born in Liverpool, resided with 2 English born servants. HO107/2067.522.27 ED 25. The Irishcom residents in 1851 included: Eileen Atkins, a 15 year old, a servant to a spirit merchant's clerk family; Eileen Faiers, a 25 year old nursemaid to a ribbon and fringe manufacturer's family; already present since 1841; James Roe now a 53 year old Chelsea pensioner, his Coventrian wife and 3 lodgers; George Clarke a 48 year old tailor from Cork, his Durham-born wife, family and lodger; Eliza Sheeon, a 17 year old servant to a watch engravers family; Susan Carregan, a 26 year old servant to a silk throwster's family; already present in 1841 Philip Stewart, a 61 year old box maker, his wife, Coventrian daughter and brother-in-law John Brazel; John Sullivan a 50 year old agricultural labourer and family; John Darlason, a 73 year old Coventrian hand loom ribbon weaver, with Esther his Irish-born wife, Matilda his Coventrian daughter, Caroline Morris his 40 year old daughter-in-law, a Dublin born filler of silk and her 3 year old Coventrian son. John Darlason had moved from nearby Well Street since 1841 with Caroline then a winder and her daughter Sarah both then known as McCabe. HO107/1153 Book 2.36.27 ED 4. Caroline again had moved to share with another household a dwelling at 2C2 Agnes Lane by 1861 with her 14 year old son James now described as a silk weaver RG9/2207.29.6 ED 10; Residing close-by in an adjacent street to Agnes Lane at C6 Cook Street was another Dubliner grouping who had also moved away from Hill Street since 1851. This was Ann Steward a widow (Philip Stewart had presumably died) with her brother James Brassell, a silk weaver from Dublin and her daughter, Mary Steward an 18 year old silk weaving Coventrian. They shared this dwelling with 2 other households RG9/2207.27.1 ED 10. That both James Morris and Mary Steward were both described as weavers at such young ages cautions against easily assuming a socio-economic class or skill based on occupational description alone;

Already noted in 1841 there was Thomas Harris, a 42 year old hand loom ribbon weaver with his Coventrian wife and family; David Taylor, a 48 year old Coventrian with his family including Irish-born wife Isabella, who with such a distinctive name could have been the Isabella Sly mentioned above or possibly 20 year old Irish-born Isabella Price a servant at 1 Broadgate in 1841 HO107/1152 Book 1.5.1 ED 1.

The Taylor family appeared to be related to the Harris family, being the next household on the schedule to the Harris family, and also among the Taylors was Eliza Harris referred to as a daughter-in-law from Ireland; Thomas Elston, a 37 year old ribbon weaver with his Banburian wife and Coventrian daughter who had moved from the High Street since 1841; John Brooks a 36 year old hand loom ribbon weaver with his Coventrian wife and son. From the 1851 Irishcom in Hill Street, only the following two families could be located citywide in 1861: First, John Brooks from Dublin and his

family were still to be found in 1861 in Hill Street at 2C 1 Hill Street. Second, the Harris family by 1861 had moved to the edge of the city to (52) Red Lane RG9/2205.80.9 ED 37 and were noted there again in 1871 at (127) Red Lane RG10/3176.142.24 ED 21.Third, Ester Darlison resided at (4) Excise Yard, Smithford Street. She was mentioned as John Darlason's wife in 1851 but by 1861 was a 76 year old widow and silk filler from Ireland living with her 30 year old Coventrian daughter Matilda who was a silk filler. They shared a house with 11 others under 4 heads RG9/2203.34.1 ED19.

By 1871 Ester appears to have died and Matilda was now living at 15 Cobden Street RG10/3176.140.20 ED 21 at the then edge of the city with Caroline and James Morris, coming together again as they were in 1851 in Hill Street. Living just around the corner from them was the Harris family who it will be recalled lived close to the Darlason/Morris family in Hill Street and who by 1861 had moved from Hill Street to (52) Red Lane RG9/2205.80.9 ED 37, and were noted there again in 1871, at (127) Red Lane RG/10 3176.142.24 ED 21. Caroline and Matilda remained as a winder and filler respectively over the years.

1861

The Irishcom in Hill Street in 1861 were: 5C4 Dubliner Martin Bowen, a 47 years iron founder's labourer, with his wife and an iron moulder son aged 19. Another iron moulder son aged 16 was born in New York; 9C3 Richard Thompson, a 51 year old coach lace weaver, with his wife and family from Dublin including a 7 year old son born in Manchester; 3C1 Ann Mourn, a 50 year old unmarried laundress. By 1871 Martin Bowen, now described as a gardener and his wife had moved to a cottage in the vicinity at the back of Upper Well Street RG10/3179.55.4 ED 4. His sons were no longer identifiable. Richard Thompson appears to have died and his wife and son had vacated by 1871 to 1C11 Little Park Street RG10/3175.130.14 ED 10. Ann Mourn could not be located in 1871. The only Irish associated census reference to the St. Osburg's priory is a lowly one in 1861 where (149) Hill Street refers to Fr Ralph Pratt and Fr John Jenkins born Sedgeley, Staffs, a school mistress and 2 servants to include Ann Dunn an Irish-born 19 year old house servant RG9/2204.25.26 ED 26.

1871

In 1871 the Irishcom Hill Street residents were: Thomas McGhee, a 58 year old general dealer from Girven and his wife and niece who were both Cork born; Patrick Maguire, a 65 year old tailor from Belleck, Co. Fermanagh and his general dealer wife from Weymouth with 4 non-Irishcom lodgers; at 14C3 Jane Moore a 31 year old, silk winder, Coventrian widow, lived with 3 children, Alice aged 9, James aged 4, both born in Killarney, and a 3 month old Coventrian daughter; at 3C1 Bridget Adams a 65 year old, widow from Mayo, lived close to 5C1 where resided Ann Collins, an unmarried 70 year old, silk weaver, from Dublin. Patrick Maguire and his wife had moved from nearby 31 Smithford Street since 1861 where they also had kept four lodgers RG9/2203.44.21 ED 19. Apart from the Maguires no 1871 Irishcom resident of Hill Street could be located in Coventry a decade earlier, though some confusion arises over the specific Girven born Thomas McGhee relationship to an Irish-born Thomas McGee found in Crow Lane a decade earlier. Jane Moore lived at 14C3, one of 21 houses in the court, reminding again that these courts could contain a large number of houses. There was no Irish connection shown for the four priests, Fr Thomas Cuthbert Smith born Preston, Lancs, Fr Edmund Moore born Ingham, Lincolnshire, the previously mentioned Fr Jenkins and Fr Antonio Pereira born Calcutta, India, or a housekeeper and housemaid that were resident in the priory (109) Hill Street RG10/3177.82.21 ED 29.

Table A.3.1
Major Irishcom Residents of Hill Street 1841 to 1871 showing their movements

1841	-	+	1851	-	+	1861	-	+	1871
James Roe 2			James Roe						
Philip Stewart 3, W: Ann John Macintyre 1 James Brazell 1			Philip Stewart W: Ann D: Mary BiL: James Brazel	~~Philip~~ C6 Cook St W: Ann D: Mary BiL: James Brazel					
Thomas Harris 6			Thomas Harris	Red Lane (also in 1871)					
Catherine Hoggins 2	Fleet Street								
John Dwyer 7	Bishop St.								
Isabella Sly 1									
Catherine Sanders 1									
James Boyle 1									
Henry Fleetwood 6									
Michael Hare 1									
			John Brooks			John Brooks			
			[Eileen Atkins]						
			Eileen Faiers						
			[Susan Carregan]						
			John Sullivan						
		Well St	John Darlason W:Esther DiL: Caroline Morris, D: Matilda	2C2 Agnes Lane DiL: Caroline Exercise Yard, Smithford St. W: Ester (died by 1871) & D: Matilda. (In 1871 Matilda & Caroline at 15 Cobden St.)					

Table A.3.1 Continued
Major Irishcom Residents of Hill Street 1841 to 1871 showing their movements

1841	-	+	1851	-	+	1861	-	+	1871
			George Clarke						
			[Eliza Sheeon]						
			David Taylor & Isabella (possibly Sly)	19C 48 Spon St					
		High St	Thomas Elston	Died July 1855					
						Martin Bowen	Back of Upper Well St		
						Rich-ard Thom-pson	~~Richard~~		
						Ann Mourn	~~Ann Mourn~~		
									Thomas McGhee
								31 Smith-ford St	Patrick Maguire
									Jane Moore
									Bridget Adams
									Ann Collins

1841: 32 Irishcom/16 Irish-born. 1851: 43/22. 1861: 18/6, 1871: 10/8

Departed to = **-** ; Arrived from = +

For 1841 the number after each name represents amount of Irischcom the name supports. E.g. 1= an individual , 6 = Household head & his family.

[ ] represents a servant

John Mcintyre: See Table 3.15 re John's location in 1861. Further details are provided in Chapter 3 (West Orchard)

Caroline Morris: *Coventry Herald* 23rd May 1862: 'Brought up in custody charged with stealing a pair of boots the previous day, the property of Mr. W. Gilbert, of Cross-cheaping, of the value of 4s.6d. It appeared that the woman took the boots from Mr. Gilbert's shop, and went straight to Mr. Barke's, pawnbroker and offered them to pledge. Mr Barke suspected there was something wrong and gave her into the custody of the police.' She was sentenced to fourteen days with hard labour in the House of Correction.

HO107/1152.24-43 ED 28-29; HO107/2067.506-554 ED 25-27; RG9/2204.30-65 ED 27-29; RG10/3177.86-109 ED 28-29

Appendix 4

Newspaper Reports on Irish Behaviour

Reports before 1860

There was a pre-Famine reputation for drinking, fighting and disorderly behaviour.

Coventry Herald 21st June 1833: 'An Irishwoman, named Clinton, was brought up, charged with having been drunk in the streets on Sunday, and for being the keeper of an irregular and disorderly lodging house in Spon-street. Several respectable inhabitants of the neighbourhood attended to complain of the prisoner, and represented that the most disgraceful conduct had been carried on in her lodging. Almost every Sunday they were drinking and fighting, and a complete nuisance to the street. Clinton admitted that her lodgers were sometimes a little disorderly. The Magistrates said, that if she did not break up her establishment and quit the city in a week, they would commit her to the Sessions, if the proper informations were laid against her. To the Magistrates' proposal she consented, and was discharged. Edward Brennan, an Irishman and keeper of another lodging house, in the same street, came up, attended by Mr. Royle, to complain of Davis, the watchman on that round, for having violently beaten him on Saturday night. The evidence in the case was conflicting, but from the whole it appeared that there had been a row at Brennan's house, and cries of "murder;" that the watchman went to the house, when a fight ensued between Brennan and the watchman, in which the former was violently beaten and kicked.' The complaint was dismissed.

Coventry Herald 15th August 1834: Thomas Welch, an Irishman, was brought in for being drunk and abusive, and fined 2s. 6d., and in default of payment, to be put in the stocks for one hour.

The *Coventry Herald* 25th August 1837 told in a style that mocked the Irish dialect of: Irish labourers seeking work locally in the 1830s; an Irish predilection for fighting with any handy weapon; and a violent dislike of the English.

> 'Assault by Several Irish Labourers - John Doyle was charged with assaulting Archibald McMillan who was walking along London Road near the Hertford Arms at eleven o'clock on a Sunday morning. Doyle was reported as having cried out "here's another English b---. Let's murder him". McMillan replied he was a Scotsman, and on hearing his accent they let him go after having struck him on the head with a stick and 'wounding him severely on the ear'. Doyle's companions Thomas Griffin, Nicholas Farlane, and Thomas Morran had evidence given against them by Robert Watts who appeared in pain from bandaged injuries on his head and left arm. He said the prisoners started singing after being served ale and when the landlord asked them to desist they refused. Then Doyle 'struck me on the head with a sickle, which cut through my hat and cut my head a little' and pursued him down the road and beat him with a stick. When called for their defence 'Tom Griffiths and Doyle agreed that Nick Farlane should speak first. "Now Nick," says Tom, "d'ye go on, and for the love o'God tell the Gintlemen the thruth".'

Farlane told how the landlord and Watts began to abuse them with Watts striking Doyle who was knocked down by a long poker and who feared the wages he carried on behalf of all the labourers would be robbed. He continued that later as they approached Coventry, 'there were hundreds of persons [who] came and met them, and said they had

been murdering a man. The people threw a shower of stones at them'. "Believe me masters, We kem to get a bit of hard work and not fight, for not a blow of fighting will we do if we can help it."

Coventry Herald 12th August 1842: John Conroy appeared to answer a charge of having assaulted James Hickey…Conroy had committed an assault; but it appeared upon the whole, that Hickey, who is the only Munster man in rag-fair district [Greyfriars Lane], while the others are all Connaughters, has been for some time past in constant hot water and perpetual rows, in consequence of the native provincial jealousy, which somehow or other has the effect of setting them all together by the ears upon slightest provocation, and sometimes from the simple love of a kick-up, so that the lane has latterly been in a continual state of uproar. Conroy was fined … and Hickey… cautioned.

Coventry Herald 31st July 1846: 'An old rag and bone merchant, residing in Bailey-lane, named John Hassett, and his wife Bridget Hassett and Charles Oughton were brought up charged with having violently assaulted Ann, the wife of John Hollick. - These parties, who have long been the annoyance of the neighbourhood, were convicted and fined 2s. 6d. each, which, with the expenses, amounted to 6s. 8d. each.'

Coventry Standard 26th February 1847: John Fitzgibbon, an Irishman was charged with being drunk and incapable of taking care of himself. He said if his honour would discharge him, he would make his way to London. He was admonished and discharged.

Coventry Standard 26th March 1847: Wm Merridew, landlord of the Grazier's Arms, 5 Well Street was summoned for allowing disorderly persons to remain until 3am on 18th March. The police constable said he heard great noise and when he called to the door Merridew said they were keeping St Patrick's day. Later the policeman called again and told them to stop the noise which had become louder but was informed by an occupant that he would make as much noise as he pleased. Merridew said it was a private party and they all resided in the same house and there had been no complaint from neighbours. The magistrates dismissed the charge.

Coventry Standard 11th February 1848: 'John Gallaghan, a hawker of glass and earthenware, was charged by Policeman Salmon with being drunk and charging a young woman with having robbed him of nineteen shillings and sixpence, when on searching him at the watch-house, the exact sum was found in one pocket, and £15 in gold in another. His defence was that he was drunk, and was not aware what he was doing. Fined 5s. and 4s. 6d. costs, for being drunk.'

Coventry Herald 30th March 1849: Patrick Grogan was sentenced to twelve months at the Coventry Division of the Warwickshire Assizes for stealing clothes at Great Packington. The clothes were found by a policeman in the prisoner's house in Coventry. Grogan called three of his brothers, Owen, John and Michael with their father Pat and Kate Casey 'to give him a character, but the deep Irish brogue was of such a character that it nearly puzzled his Lordship to make anything of it'.

Coventry Standard 20th July 1849: James McDurmot and Owen Grogan, Irishmen, were charged with causing a breach of the peace in Leicester Street, with assaulting one of their countrymen; and Grogan with assaulting a policeman. Fined 5s. each and costs, or 14 days in gaol.

Coventry Standard 14th September 1849: 'Bridget McIntire, an Irish woman, residing at the bottom of West Orchard, was charged with being disorderly and creating a great disturbance amongst her neighbours. She, in her defence, endeavoured to make it appear she was the most peaceable woman living, except when her husband came home drunk and began his bad tricks, then she could not help breaking out a bit. The Magistrates advised her not to make her own case worse by criminating her husband, and after a caution for the future she was discharged.'
In 1851 Bridget, a hawker lived, with her Irish-born husband John and their two Cambridge-born sons aged 14 and 12. The older son Francis/Frank according to the *Coventry Standard* 1st August 1851 was charged at Warwickshire Assizes, with on 7th May having 'burglariously broken and entered the dwelling-house of Thomas Hollier, and stolen a bottle of peppermint'. The *Coventry Herald* 31st October 1856 reported John 'who has frequently before figured in the same character, was again brought up charged with being drunk and disorderly at one o'clock that morning. PC Frankton spoke to the defendant's very violent behaviour.' He was fined and in default of payment would be committed to the stocks for six hours. The same paper on 15th August 1861 reported John was charged with being drunk and disorderly. John lived on his own in 1861 and was located in the workhouse in 1871 and 1881.

Coventry Standard 28th September 1849: 'Michael Branan an Irishman, residing in Warwick-lane was charged with committing a violent assault on the persons of Jane Tranter and John Gold, by beating them with a poker. The defendant keeps a lodging-house, and a person having died there of the cholera, some persons had taken away the bed and were about to burn it, which was the cause of the disturbance. Branan admitted that he beat the woman with his walking stick, but denied using the poker. Fined 20s., and costs 7s. 6d., or one month in gaol.'

Coventry Herald 28th October 1859: 'William Garritty was charged with having been drunk and disorderly in Palmer-lane, at four o'clock on Sunday afternoon. It appeared that a Police Constable, passing through Broad-gate on duty, heard sounds as of a fray proceeding from the above-named classic ground. Hastening, as in duty bound, to the scene of the disturbance, the Officer found a number of "wild" Irishmen flourishing pokers and throwing bricks and stones in all directions' Garrity began kicking the constable. He was fined with costs.

Coventry Standard 9th August 1850: Martin Campion, an Irishman, residing in Leicester-street was charged with being drunk and disorderly on Sunday night, and creating a disturbance. The policeman said that on attempting to prevail upon him to be quiet, he got up to the chamber window of a house, and continued to shout in such an unintelligible jargon that it occasioned a great many persons to stop in the street and obstruct the path, and in order to clear the street he took Campion to the Watch-house.
Magistrate-"Well, you hear what the constable says: what have you to say?" Irishman-"Please your honour, I never said an English word to any of the'em, when this ere man come an took me off to the Watch-house." Constable- "that is so far true; for himself and his companions all spoke in pure Irish, so that it was impossible to understand what they said; but be it in whatever language it might, it was quite sufficient to disturb the public peace". He was allowed to put a shilling in the poor-box, and discharged.

Coventry Herald 30th August 1850: 'Michael Grogan, one of the Irish gang located in Leicester-street, was brought up for a savage assault upon Richard Harwood, at the White Bear public-house, Leicester-row on Saturday night. It appeared that a mixed company of English and Irish were drinking in the house, when a quarrel and fight arose

between Grogan and some other man. Harwood interfered to separate the combatants, when Grogan turned upon him, got him down, and beginning to worry him like a wild beast, bit his nose completely through, besides inflicting another severe wound on the head, - Fined 20s. and 8s 6d. costs, or in default of payment to be imprisoned for six weeks.'
Coventry Herald 15th November 1850: 'James Harvey, one of the Irish gang infesting Leicester-street was fined 5s., and 12s. 6d. costs for assaulting PC Iliffe, when interfering to suppress a row, in April last, since which time Harvey had been out of the way.'

Coventry Standard 14th February 1851: 'Two wretched Irishmen were brought up, charged with fighting at 10 o'clock on Sunday night.' They were James Harvey and Lackey Convoy. Harvey had been fighting with no shirt on. Policeman Hollick took him to the watch-house but on the way Harvey fastened his teeth on Hollick's arm and also kicked him violently. As a lenient fine for former offences had 'easily been paid by this fraternity on former occasions' Harvey was ordered to pay a fine of £2, and 8s. 6. costs. Convoy was bound to the peace.
The same edition told of Michael Burke, an Irishman, that been charged by his countrywoman, Honor Harvey, with assaulting her on Monday morning last. 'This was an Irish row, in Leicester-street where a great number of the "finest pissantry" in the world are located, and the baptism of one of their children having taken place on the Sunday, it was celebrated with a drunken carousal and a furious quarrel, amongst which poor Honor came in for her share of the thrashing; but as it appeared that her conduct was as violent as any of the rest, Michael was allowed to promise he would never associate with such a low-lived set again, or assault any one. -The case was dismissed.' Then John Egan, an Irish youth, charged Michael Grogan with "killing" him on Sunday night and it was the previous defendant Michael Burke that kindly saved his life. 'The long roundabout story he told in broad Irish, to show how he was "killed" amused everyone in the Court for some time, and Grogan was at last fined 1s. and 10s. 6d. costs, or go to gaol for 21 days. The money was immediately paid.'

Coventry Herald 7th March 1851: Rose Elliott a 53 year old hawker from Newry who lived with her Coventry-born shoemaker husband in Greyfriars Lane was referred to as an Irishwoman. She was found drunk in a helpless state in Marketplace by Inspector Vice. On promising not to reoffend she was set free.

Coventry Herald 6th June 1851: Michael Brannan was fined 2s. 6d., and 9s. 6d. costs, or in default of payment to be imprisoned one month, for assaulting Mary Ann Harris, his daughter-in-law. David Broughill, a youth 16 years of age, was committed for trial on a charge of stealing a brace of pistols, the property of Mr. John Newark, of Bailey-lane. (Possibly David Briryhill, 14 year old, Irish-born, ribbon weaver, Brewery St., in 1851 census.)

Coventry Standard 6th June 1851: 'James Gallaghan, Richard Gallaghan, and James Harvey all Irishmen, were charged with creating a breach of the peace last night, in Much Park Street, by shouting, hooting, and fighting. They were ordered to find sureties in £10, and two others in £5 each, to keep the peace for one month.' The *Herald* of the same date said were 'kicking up a regular Irish row and fight'. It also reported that 'an Irishman, who spoke so unintelligibly that it was impossible to understand his name, was brought up for an act of vagrancy by sleeping in a carriage in a public inn yard'. On promising to leave the town he was discharged.

Coventry Standard 1st August 1851: John Hopkins, an Irishman, residing in Leicester-street was found drunk on Sunday morning between two and three o'clock, and disturbing the peace of the neighbourhood. He was ordered to keep the peace for a month. In the same paper it was reported 'Eliza Doran, an old woman, was charged with being drunk at half past 1 o'clock on Sunday morning. -Ordered to leave the town immediately.' (Elizabeth Doran, 64 year old, Irish-born weaver, Grove St., in 1851 census.)
Coventry Herald 29th August 1851: Michael Grogan charged with drunken and disorderly conduct in Leicester Row and assaulting a police constable. Mary Grogan who was brought up for disorderly conduct in Much Park-street, was reprimanded and discharged.

On 10th September 1852 the *Coventry Herald* reported that: 'Thomas Bryan, an Irishman and John Jackson, an Englishman, were charged with committing a brutal assault upon an Irish agricultural labourer Thomas Hands.' He was travelling along Much Park Street when he was knocked down by the defendants who had come down an entry. '[They] kicked him violently; the poor fellow's head and hands bearing unequivocal marks of the violence.' They were each fined 5s. and 7s. 6d. expenses.

Coventry Standard 5th November 1852: 'Patrick Grogan and Thomas Lines were charged…with committing a breach of the peace in Much Park street, at 12 o'clock on Monday night in an Irish row.' James Harvey who was in the same party was charged with assaulting a policeman.

Coventry Herald 31st December 1852: Michael Rain, an Irishman, was charged with violently assaulting John Orton. In the Butcher's Arms, in New-Buildings, Rain abused Orton for previously assisting the police to take another Irishman to the police station. Orton was waylaid by Rain and another man when he later left the Arms, when after words Rain struck Orton a violent blow on the mouth cutting his lip.[1]

Coventry Standard 14th January 1853: 'John Fallen, an Irishman, charged a woman, named Bridget Finnerty, with having, on Sunday evening last, made free with his skull, by laying about it with an iron "proker," (sic) after breaking open the door of his house in Warwick-lane, and all because he was after protecting his wife from an attack upon her by Mary Finnerty. After a great deal of recrimination in broad Irish, which no one could understand but themselves, Bridget consented to promise she would never take up the "proker" again to beat about any one's head.'

Coventry Herald 28th January 1853 reported that John Roach was charged by PC Iliffe with being drunk and disorderly in the Barrack Yard, (Court 14) Much Park Street. Roach was 'drunk, stripped, and in a fighting attitude there being about thirty Irish present. Inspector Vice said there were about thirty rooms all occupied by the Irish'.

Coventry Standard 22nd April 1853 reported that Owen Grogan an Irishman was charged with committing 'a most brutal assault' on Christopher Walton in West Orchard. Walton said he was returning home through West Orchard with three others when he saw a crowd of persons some of whom were quarrelling. He asked someone what was the matter, and was 'instantly knocked down, kicked severely about the body and face, and two of his double teeth were kicked out'. Two witnesses corroborated the

[1] It would appear this was Michael Ruane, a 30 year old Irish-born labourer lodging with John Ruane and family at Sch 81 New Buildings.

brutal manner in which he had been kicked. Grogan was fined £2, and 15s. 6d. costs, or two months in gaol.

Coventry Herald 9th September 1853: Sergeant Coltman said he heard a great noise and yelling on Sunday night near St. John's Church and he took Michael Harrity into custody; at the Station house he behaved in a most violent manner. Philip Harrity was charged by Mr Job Else with assaulting him near his own door in West Orchard. The defendant called out for any Englishman that would stand before him. Else took no notice of him, when Harrity came over and struck him
Coventry Standard 21st October 1853: Michael Brandon and Martin Galhagan were charged with being drunk and disorderly in Broadgate on Sunday night. The latter had challenged the former to fight.

Coventry Standard 26th May 1854: William Garratty an Irishman was charged with conducting himself in a drunken and riotous manner in Grey Friar's-lane and again in Cross-cheaping at seven o'clock on Sunday evening when Policemen Frankton and Lee were taking him to the Watch-house. Michael Bourne, another Irishman was charged with aiding and assisting Garratty, and attempting to rescue him from custody. A witness saw the policemen surrounded by a crowd of Irishmen. They were each fined £5. The Magistrates said these most disgraceful Sunday disturbances by Irish men and women were of such frequent occurrence that they were determined in every case that may be proved before them to impose the highest fine the law will allow, as such practices must be suppressed.

Coventry Standard 6th October 1854: Thomas Grogan described as 'an Irishman' was charged with assaulting John Dayman once a fellow worker, who Grogan accused of having him dismissed by complaining to their employer. Dayman was 'badly used' after being knocked down and kicked by Grogan who was fined £2, and 9s. 6d. costs or in default two months.

Coventry Standard 20th April 1855: 'John Ryan attended to answer a charge of having assaulted Owen Grogan. In this case the parties were Irish, and the assault was said to have arisen out of some "old grudge" amongst the parties. Grogan however, appeared in this instance to have come in for a severe share of the reckoning, and Ryan was eventually fined 5s. and 10s. 6d costs. The *Coventry Standard* of the same date titled its report 'An Irish Row' and told that drink was involved: '[they had been] drinking together, when complainant, having his fighting propensities roused, wanted any man to stand before him, and he would give him something; whereupon a fight took place, and defendant damaged complainants upper works very seriously'.

Coventry Herald 6th July 1855: 'Michael Rowan was charged with assaulting Mrs Heritage. The assault arose from the following circumstance: -Three persons in the yard in which the complainant lived had, on a previous day, been brought up for evading the Lodging-house Act, and had been fined, and the complainant had been accused of telling Vice [Inspector of Nuisances] of these houses; and as she came into the yard Rowan assaulted her. -Defendant promised not to interfere again, and paid the costs, 5s. -The case was therefore dismissed.'

Coventry Standard 28th December 1855: 'John McIntyre was charged with being drunk and disorderly in Hertford -street, at half-past twelve o'clock on Saturday night.'

The *Coventry Standard* 28th December 1855: Richard and Ann Garragan were charged with being disorderly in West Orchard and assaulting PC Lee. The constable said about one o'clock on Monday morning he heard a great disturbance and cries of murder in Caldicott's yard. He found about twenty-four Irishmen, among them Richard, stripped to his shirt, and fighting. Garraghan refused to go home so he took him into custody. Garrahan immediately struck him on the eye three times. The crown of his hat was cut out by a blow from a stick. Ann was so violent that he had to use his staff to her. She said to Inspector Vice they had been christening a child and some drink had been taken. The Magistrates said it was a brutal assault and fined Richard £5 and Ann 40s. and costs. James Garragan was charged with being drunk and disorderly, for striking PC Lee violently, and for rescuing Richard after PC Lee had taken him into custody. He was fined £5 and costs.
The *Coventry Standard* 25th January 1856 reported five Irishmen were brought up on a charge of riotous conduct. Policeman Cross saw Thomas Grogan drunk coming out of Grey Friar's-lane insulting everybody. Grogan was swinging an iron crane and striking everybody; it was a fearful-looking instrument. Another of the gang John Kenney came out howling and making a great noise and a William Adams who said it was a regular Irish row was struck on the back with the crane. A child was dead belonging to one of the party and they had got drunk. Grogan's behaviour was so outrageous that persons outside threw stones at the windows and the corpse of the child was covered over with pieces of glass and stones. Grogan and Kenney were ordered to find bail of £25 and to keep the peace for three months.

Coventry Herald 18th April 1856: 'James Harvey was charged with being drunk and disorderly, and violently assaulting James Lynn, in Grey Friar's-lane on Tuesday. PC Frost said he was on duty in High-street, when a girl came and told him of two men beating her father in the lane. He went down and took the prisoner into custody.' Lynn called to the lock-up to say he would not give evidence, so Harvey was discharged.

Coventry Standard 4th July 1856 reported that Mary Ann Worley, a stout Irishwoman, was charged with using indecent and obscene language in Much Park Street to a policeman who called to patch up a row between herself and a neighbour Mrs Harding. She said she had been provoked by Mrs Harding who she alleged had a habit of calling her "dirty Irish" and other unpleasant names. Worley was bound to the peace on her own sureties for 28 days.

Coventry Standard 4th July 1856: Patrick Grogan charged Bridget Lynes with violently assaulting him with a jug. As there were no witnesses the case was dismissed.
The 1861 census showed they were neighbours in Brewery Street; these incidents illustrate the Irish could irritate each other as neighbours.

Coventry Herald 8th August 1856: Richard Galligan was charged by PC Muston with being drunk and disorderly, who had 'set up an Irish howl, and made use of an abusive epithet'.

Coventry Herald 31st October 1856: 'Thomas Duffy was charged by PC Lee with being drunk and disorderly at a quarter to one on Sunday morning, in Broadgate. It seemed a great number of Irish were fighting and creating a disturbance at the time and place in question and the defendant was one of the most violent.'

Coventry Standard 2nd January 1857: A ragged and dirty Irishman called Tom Geary was charged with being drunk and fighting in Earl Street. The defendant according to

PC Muston 'capered around the street like a wild beast'. While being conveyed to the lock-up Geary vigorously resisted; he could not be held by his clothes as they were too rotten. Geary had been in Coventry for some weeks and worked for Hogan a "translator" of old boots. He was discharged after expressing his sorrow and receiving a salutary caution.

Coventry Standard 8th May 1857: Martin Jennings charged Michael Grogan and John Clogher with violently assaulting him, the former by striking him on the nose and the latter on the eye. After listening to testimony and witnesses the case was dismissed.

The Furlong family was the first Irish family to be mentioned in the introduction to this study. The *Coventry Standard* 10th October 1856 stated that Alice Furlong was charged with being drunk in the Butcher Row at 1.30 am. 'As the girl was respectable, and it seemed from her statement and appearance that the occurrence was owing to accident more than anything else, she was discharged on promising to avoid placing herself in a similar situation in the future.' It also stated John Fraser was charged with being drunk and disorderly at three o'clock in the morning. PC Castle said there was a row among Irish people who he dispersed but Fraser refused to move.

Coventry Standard 10th July 1857 told of an inquest in the Barley Mow on the body of John Lynes, aged 6 years who burned to death. Bridget Lynes, his mother-in-law recounted how she left him by the fire in order to get tea in a shop. When she returned after an hour and a half she found him badly burned; she took him outside the house where he died after ten minutes. Thomas Mann a neighbour said he saw the deceased's mother beat the child several times but not severely. A neighbour Sarah Onions told of her efforts to revive the child and, while she had heard that its mother ill-treated the child she did not ever see it happening. William Lynes the child's father said he was an Irishman and that his wife was a hasty woman but he did not think she would injure a child. However he had brought his wife before the magistrates about six months ago for ill-treating the deceased; he had said then his wife had threatened many times to murder him who was a child by his first wife. PC Payne said he looked over the floor and could find no blackness where the body had lain. The foreman said the circumstances were most mysterious; an open verdict was returned stating the deceased was burned to death, but by what means his clothes caught, or were set on fire, there was no evidence to show.

Coventry Standard 11th December 1857: 'Lucy, the wife of John Hogan, pensioner, charged her said husband with threatening to murder her. She said it was only when he was drunk that he abused her, but sometimes he would be drinking for more than a month, and she was afraid he would do her some harm. Ordered to find bail to keep the peace for three months, himself and one surety in £10 each. Hogan was far from being sober when he came to answer the charge, and as he was unprovided with the stipulated security he was committed to the House of Correction'. In the 1851 census John Hogan was a 45 year old pensioner from Tipperary, Lucy was a 40 year old silk winder born in Coventry.[2]

Coventry Standard 25th December 1857 told that 'Teddy Harrity, an Hibernian, was charged by PC Holden with being drunk and disorderly, in Grey Friar's Lane'. He apologised saying 'he had lived in Coventry for nine years…and had never been there before'. The *Coventry Herald* 24th December 1857 reported Teddy Harrity was charged with being drunk and creating a disturbance in Greyfriars Lane on Saturday night. It

[2] HO107/2068.368.9 ED 1s

said ‘Teddy, who is, of course, a native of the Emerald Isle admitted he was drunk’ had the case against him dismissed on 2s. 6d. being left in the poor-box. In the same edition Mary Ryan, an Irish tramp had her case for being drunk and incapable dismissed provided she left the town immediately.

Coventry Herald and *Coventry Standard* 6th August 1858: John Burke was charged with violently assaulting PC Perkins in Warwick Lane. Perkins said he found Burke drunk and quarrelling with a man who was endeavouring to take him home. Perkins was reported by a witness as calling out to Burke “Come out you Irish ---, and see if I won’t take you”. Burke was fined 10s. and costs.

Coventry Herald 15th October 1858: Catherine Burke was charged with assault on Stephen Corbett a bailiff who went into her house to seeking £2.17s. 2d levied, whereon he said ‘she snatched up a large coal pick and struck at him’. In the ensuing struggle his clothes were torn while ‘the pick struck her lightly on the cheek’. Corbett said he ‘immediately left the place, for a large mob of Irish people had gathered round the door, and he was afraid for his life’. The case was eventually dismissed.

Coventry Standard 15th October 1858: John Devany was fined 5s. and costs for having been drunk and disorderly. John assured the magistrates he was going to join the teetotallers that morning and should never trouble them again, but the magistrates had no faith in his promises as he was well known in court.

Coventry Herald 12th November 1858: ‘Mary Kennedy, an Irishwoman, who appeared in this position for the fourteenth time, was charged with being drunk and disorderly and incapable…in Sherbourne Street…four stalwart constables had to convey her to the Station house on a stretcher. She begged for mercy on account of her fatherless children.’ Fined 5s. and costs, and in default of payment, committed to the stocks for six hours.

Coventry Standard 21st January 1859: Owen Grogan was charged with assaulting Patrick Lynes. Lynes said that he was in bed when he heard a disturbance downstairs. He went down and found Grogan and his brother fighting. He did not interfere but went back to bed but was followed by Grogan who violently assaulted him, using a candlestick to hit him. Michael Grogan said he was with two of his brothers in Lynes’ house when he came downstairs and ‘struck me on the back of the head with a smoothing iron, making me insensible’. After the contradictory statements the magistrates dismissed the case.

Coventry Times 9th March 1859: ‘An Old Offender’ Bridget Maguire was charged with being drunk and disorderly in Butcher Row. ‘As she wiped her eye, promising not to come again, she was discharged.’
The same edition: ‘A Drunken Hero. - James Galligan was charged with being drunk and wanting to fight, the previous night in West-orchard’. ‘James had drank until he became so warlike disposed that he wanted to fight with anybody. - the man in blue therefore locked him up till his pugilistic ardour had somewhat subsided. Fined 5s and costs.’

Coventry Times 30th March 1859: ‘Drunk Again.- Owen Grogan was charged with being drunk in Well-street…Owen being no stranger, and admitting he had a drop too much, was fined 5s. and costs. A Brace of Boxers. - John Ganley and Larry Kelly were charged with being drunk and fighting in Jordan-well…fined 5s. and costs each.

This report in the *Coventry Standard* 25th June 1859 mentions Irish on three occasions. 'Irish Row. - John Collins, Thomas Gallagher, and John Garroty, three Irishmen, were placed in the dock on a charge of creating a disturbance on Sunday night. It appeared that the Irish people made several disturbances, and the three prisoners behaved so badly that they were apprehended by PC Frankton. They were each ordered to put 2s.6d in the poor box. Underneath the report was the following: 'Cruelty to a Cat
- John Gallaghan was brought up for cruelly ill using a cat in Much Park-street on Sunday morning at half-past three o'clock. It appeared that the fellow was in Much Park-street in a state of intoxication, and he had two large dogs which he set on all cats he saw. They worried one, broke several of her ribs, and killed her. Fined 5s. and cost…'

Coventry Standard 5th July 1859: 'Thomas Macdonald was charged with being drunk and fighting in a yard in Grey Friars-lane on Sunday afternoon. It appeared that there was an Irish row in the lane, which proceeded to such an extent that the inhabitants were obliged to put their shutters up. A policeman interfered, upon which the defendant and the others went down a yard to conclude their combat. The policeman then took him into custody. Released with a reprimand.'

Coventry Standard 15th July 1859: Owen Grogan was charged with assaulting Emma Read, a winder who lived next door to him. She said he was abusing her little brother and striking him. She went down and asked him what he meant by it, upon which he used improper language to her, and struck her on the breast. He would have struck her again if neighbours had not called out.

Coventry Herald 12th August 1859 reported 'Thomas Malone, a son of the Emerald Isle was charged by PC Frankton with having been drunk and disorderly in Smithford-street, on the previous day - it appeared that the defendant's conduct was violent in the extreme. He committed assaults on nearly every person who came his way - fined 5s. and 4s. 6d. costs. In default of payment he was committed to the stocks for six hours'.

Coventry Herald 17th September 1859: Michael Galligan was charged with having been drunk and disorderly in Much Park Street. The defendant 'who has a character of being a troublesome customer, was fined 5s., and costs 4s. 6d. In default of payment he was to be sent to the stocks for six hours'. Philip Harrity was charged with fighting in Broadgate on Sunday morning. He was said to be 'addicted to eccentricities of this kind', and was bound to the peace for three months.

Coventry Herald 23rd September 1859: Thomas Ryan charged Thomas Grogan with assaulting him in Grey Friar's-lane. The defendant was said to have knocked him down, beat him and dragged him about by the hair of his head. Thomas Grogan was then charged by James Burke with assaulting him. Burke was accused by Grogan of striking him first on the head with a hammer, and the top of a poker was taken from Durfey who was Ryan's brother-in-law. The Magistrates considered it a 'regular Irish row, in which all parties were equally blameable, dismissed both cases, and divided the costs'. Interestingly the reason Ryan suggested for him being attacked was that his sister kept company with one of the Grogans and 'he told her he would have nothing to do with her if she associated with such characters'. This shows the Irish themselves could distinguish between reliable and troublesome Irish families. There appeared to be a grudge between these two families as was noted in *Coventry Standard* 20th April 1855.

Size of Irish population

On 17th April 1851 the *Coventry Herald* reported the population totals for the City parishes in a small panel on the back page. Within the panel it found sufficient room to state 'In the neighbourhood of Leicester-Street, New-Buildings, and West Orchard, there are upwards of 260 Irish.' This would suggest that at this time there was interest in knowing the size of the Irish population and that the streets with Irish presence were well known. How this figure was arrived at is unclear since the only census data available was the published data and this provided just one figure of 698 Irish-born for the whole city. This figure may have been arrived at if it was surmised that as these streets were all part of Holy Trinity Parish, the report made a rough division between the two Coventry parishes comprising the city (Holy Trinity and St. Michael) with the barracks Irish-born in St. Michael excluded from the calculation. The actual figures for the Holy Trinity parish were 351 Irish-born/637 Irishcom.

Overcrowding, Concern about disease and Comments about the Irish

The Inspector of Nuisances was John Vice whose regular reports to the Local Board of Health under whose auspices he worked were published in the local papers. Later Abraham Webster fulfilled the role.

Coventry Standard 8th March 1850: 'John Vice inspector of lodging-houses, made a report of the disgraceful state of some houses in Leicester-street, lately known as Dog-lane, where he stated 150 Irish men and women are located. In one room, about 12 feet square, the floor of which was covered with shavings, there were 14 persons of both sexes lying intermixed with each other, some of them being almost in a state of nudity, and candles were burning without anything to hold them but mud or clay stuck against the wall, and the stench arising from the heat and filth of their bodies was most intolerable. The property belongs to a person of the name of Bromley, who lives a few miles out of London, and Mr Molesworth, of Silver-street, is the agent, and collects the rents. Vice said he had several times told Molesworth he must get rid of such tenants, as the health of the whole neighbourhood was endangered by the noxious effluvium arising from the filthy bodies; but he had taken no steps to remove the nuisance. – The Magistrate said such a state of things must not be allowed to continue, and the case should be laid before the Local Board of Health.'

Coventry Herald 7th March 1851 reported that John Gallaghan was summoned for keeping an unregistered common lodging house in Leicester Street. Inspector Vice said that when he visited the two roomed house, a man, wife and three children were lodging with John, his wife and four children. He was advised of the penalties and the case was adjourned for a week in order for John to fulfil his promise to expel the lodgers. Mark Cronan, John Rooney, Patrick Grogan and 'three or four others' all Irish, were dealt with similarly; they were told to get rid of lodgers and that they would not be permitted to keep lodgers in such tenements.

Coventry Herald 4th April 1851: 'Catherine Bourne, a woman living in a small tenement in Caldecott's Yard, West Orchard, appeared to answer the information of Inspector Vice, who charged her 'with keeping a common lodging–house, the same not registered'. The report continued: 'It was further shown that the houses was not only unregistered, but that it was unfit for a lodging-house. The woman herself was a widow having three children, and besides them had eight other persons in the house. Mary Bourne, a sister of the above, was similarly charged. It appeared that she occupied only one small apartment, in the same yard, had three children and besides these four lodgers, so that they were literally as thick on the floor as they could be. Both cases

were adjourned for a week, and it was ordered that in the mean time the lodgers be got rid of.'

Coventry Herald 25th April 1851: 'John Farren [Fallon] an Irishman' was charged by Vice that he kept an unregistered lodging house in Warwick Lane. Vice found in the one-roomed house Farren his wife and child in one bed, two full grown females in another bed, and two adult males in a third bed. The *Coventry Standard* of the same date reported that Inspector Vice said 'it was astonishing what a vast number of cousins and other relations these Irish people have; for they have an idea that if they can but make them relations they may lodge as many as the room will hold'. He remarked many he had summoned who had been let off on promising to get rid of their lodgers, had not done so. Farren, being asked if he would get rid of his lodgers immediately, obstinately refused to comply and was fined.

Coventry Herald 30th May 1851: 'Lackey Conroy, an Irishman living in Leicester-Street, appeared to answer the information of Inspector Vice, who charged him with unlawfully keeping a lodging house. It appeared that the house was not only unregistered, but that it was unfit to be used as a lodging-house. It consisted of only one small apartment on the ground floor, and another up stairs, and besides Conroy, his wife, and three children, there were four other full-grown persons, viz, three males and one female. -Fined 5s, and costs, or in default of payment to be imprisoned seven days.' The *Coventry Standard* of the same date added that Conroy said 'he had no lodgers now, for he could not afford to take them in. Vice proved there were several persons, of both sexes, littered down on shavings in one room'.

Coventry Herald 29th October 1852: 'John Hassett, the keeper of a lodging house in Dead-lane who had been ordered to get rid of his lodgers, his place not being fit for the purpose, appeared, and begged for more time to pay the expenses attendant upon being brought up before the Magistrates, a fortnight ago, - Inspector Vice said, the man had not ceased to take in lodgers. -Hassett said, he let his room by the week. -Vice replied, that four women of the lowest character slept in the place, and it was not fit to lodge one.'

Coventry Herald 19th November 1852: Vice reported to the Local Board of Health 'that in Much Park-street there is a yard called the Old Barrack Yard, the buildings are three stories high, and let out in rooms, chiefly to Irish families; there are thirty different rooms, in some of which two or three families reside, beside casual lodgers, which most of them take in. I have served notices upon the whole of them to get rid of their lodgers;… there are but two [privies] to the whole building, and those are in a most wretched condition.'

Coventry Standard 13th May 1853: Bridget Hassett, an Irishwoman, was charged by Inspector Vice with receiving lodgers in a house not registered. Eliza Hankerson who lived next door to Hassett, in Dead-lane was similarly charged by Police Sergeant Deeming who gave a full account of the indecent and disgusting manner in which the houses were kept. Both were fined. Another person, of the name Lynes (Irish-born Martin Lyons), living in Greyfriars Lane, was let off on the same terms

Coventry Herald 22nd July 1853: Peter Burke was charged with keeping an unregistered lodging-house. Nine persons were found in the house besides his family. The Mayor said they would let him off by paying the costs of 5s., but would be fined heavily if he reappeared before the court. The same edition reported that Vice went to White Friars

Street where a house was on fire. 'It was one of these Irish lodging houses. He had attempted to find out if the people at this house took in lodgers; but he could never could discover how many, or whether they took any. He found out they put them in the cellar, which was full of shavings, which had caught fire.'

The *Coventry Herald* 19th August 1853 reported that Patrick Burke - but undoubtedly it was Peter Burke - kept an unregistered lodging house. A policeman found in the first sleeping room two beds, one for Burke and his wife, a man and a woman in the other; upstairs there were two beds, two men in one, and a man and a boy in the other. Vice refused to register the house. Mr Smallbone representing Burke said the house was perfectly clean, but Vice said Smallbone went at a clean time, and he should have visited it at the time Vice did and he would have found the beds upstairs not quite clean. Vice continued 'they had a deal of trouble with them; they would never keep the law; they might as well register a pig-stye; he did not say that for Irish they were clean'. Mr Smallbone said 'If he took against Irish because they were Irish, and did not abide by the law, he was not fit for his office'. Vice said he should like Smallbone to go around some night and remarked 'he would want a glass of brandy'. Burke was fined 5s., and costs 12s. 6d. The same edition told that Vice charged Thomas Duffy with taking in lodgers in an unregistered house which he said was filthy in the George Yard. On a visit he found three men lying on the floor in an upper room, and Duffy and his wife and several children; in another bed, two men and an old woman. On a day previous to the visit he watched seven men into the house. Duffy was fined 5s., and costs 12s.6.

The *Coventry Herald* 30th December 1853 outlined how PC Deeming told that Charles O'Donnell, who was charged with keeping an unregistered lodging house in Chauntry Place, had in a room downstairs, a bed where he slept with his wife and three children. Upstairs there were three beds, one for two females, another for two men and a third for a boy. There was no separation, such as curtains, between the sexes. Deeming was kept at the door for ten minutes before being let in and was told the occupants were O'Donnell's mother, brothers and sister. 'If there had been twenty more, these Irish would own them all as relations' said Deeming while further remarking the house was completely unsuited as a lodging house since it was in a 'close yard and in warm weather there would be a great danger of infection'.
O'Donnell is mentioned again, twice below where two different vile and violent incidents are recounted, and also in Table 3.15.
In the same edition John McIntyre (Also Table 3.15) was charged by Vice for the same offence in Caldicott's Yard. In the kitchen of the two roomed house there was a bed where McIntyre and his wife slept while upstairs there were two beds with two men in each and a little boy on the floor. The defendant had been cautioned previously that the house was totally unsuited as a lodging house.

Coventry Standard 25th August 1854: Inspector Vice told the Local Board of Health – 'I regret to say that there has been a great increase of the low Irish that take in lodgers, and it is with great difficulty that either Deeming or myself can make out their abodes, as they are continually removing from one part of town to another. I have brought several of them before the magistrates within the last few weeks…'

Coventry Standard 4th July 1856 John Vice, Inspector of Nuisances summoned Joseph Hill for keeping pigs in the backyard to a dwelling house in New Buildings. Hill's legal representative contested that it was not such but a self contained slaughterhouse. He asked 'what were the butchers to do, they must slaughter cattle for the people to eat, though the Corporation have not provided a proper place for the purpose, but spent

thousands in providing Baths, which were useless as compared to slaughter-houses, and then the Corporation harass the butchers… He believed this information was laid by an immaculate Irishman of the name of Daly…a servant and cad of the Corporation'. Daly who he called a 'common informer' must have referred to Francis Daly a 56 year old married pipe-layer from Ireland recorded in the census of 1861.[3] It is clear some Irish (perhaps Daly was pressed by his Scottish-born wife) would not tolerate pig-keeping in their vicinity and would challenge the assumptions of local providers.

Begging

Coventry Herald 24th November 1848 John Smith, a 'sturdy Irish beggar' was sentenced to fourteen days with hard labour.

Coventry Herald 10th August 1849: John Duffy, 'an Irishman clad in the usual wretched garb of his countrymen, but carrying stout limbs and good hard face, was brought up for begging; but on promising to leave the Town was discharged.' Also 'Mary Byrne and William Byrne, her son, a child about four years of age, were brought up from the Watch-house, where they had presented themselves in the course of the night as destitute of lodgings. She stated that her husband, an Irishman had left her on the road, but being ready to follow him, she was dismissed.'

Coventry Herald 8th February 1850: Thomas Connolly, a sturdy Irish beggar, was given 13 days hard labour in prison.

Coventry Standard 24th May 1850: 'Bridget Boyles, one of those wretched women who are located in Leicester-street was charged with begging in Much Park-street. She was sentenced to seven days imprisonment, with hard labour, in the House of Correction.'

Coventry Standard 16th August 1850: Neal Kelley, a poor ragged Irishman, was brought up on a charge of begging in West Orchard. On promising to leave the town immediately he was discharged.

Coventry Herald 16th May 1851: 'Edward Macdoran, a strong muscular Irishman, who had previously been ordered to leave the Town on account of vagrancy, was again brought up, and committed for ten days to hard labour, for begging.'

Coventry Herald 10th November 1860: 'A ragged, dirty Irishman named James Hannan' was accused of stealing potatoes. Hannan agreed with the magistrate that he could not help himself. 'That's the truth. If I could get back to Ireland I'd never trouble yer Honour no more. Father Pratt and Father Moore would help me go.' The magistrate decided to wait to hear from Father Pratt if assistance was likely to be given to Hannan from the poorbox.

In *Coventry Herald* 12th July 1862 it was reported that Mary Ann Harrity, 'a little Irish girl, who was lately committed from this court for begging, was again brought up charged with begging at the Railway Station'. She said her mother sent her out to beg. The mother, who was in court, denied this, and while she was decently clad, the child was 'without shoes or stockings and with scarcely a rag to her back'. The magistrates saw evidence of neglect and sent the child for a short period to the Workhouse, following which the girl would be sent to the Industrial Home.

[3] RG92207.76.21 ED 13

Stealing and Sundry offences

Coventry Herald 11th March 1831: 'An Irishman named James Brown, was charged with having stolen a loaf from the shop of Mr. Campion, baker. -Mr. Coldray, shopman to Mr. Campion, said that the prisoner came into the shop that morning, and asked for relief; on being refused, he said he should have some, and immediately took a loaf from the window, with which he walked out of the shop.-Brown said he was in want and could not get work.' The baker did not wish to prosecute but merely to prevent a recurrence. The Magistrates ordered Brown be remanded as he was known at the Office as a troublesome fellow.

Coventry Herald 25th April 1845: Bridget Bryan was sentenced to one month imprisonment for wilfully breaking the windows of a lodging-house keeper named Cooper.

Coventry Herald 2nd May 1845: 'Bridget Callaghan was committed for trial, charged with stealing 5s. from the person of Bourke O'Ryan. It appeared that prisoner, while in a public-house, had scraped acquaintance with the prosecutor, a good-natured and respectable-looking Irishman, on the score of national sympathy, and that he having got rather cosey, and fallen asleep, she repaid a friendly treat of half-a-pint which he had given her, by picking his pocket of the amount above stated.'

Coventry Standard 18th January 1850: 'Mary Carroll, who with three other Irishwomen, were committed to gaol from this Court on Monday last, for picking pockets, was brought up from the gaol, charged in addition to her former delinquences, with having picked the pocket of Mrs Chaplin, of Bell-green, of a purse containing half-sovereign, three half-crowns…'

Coventry Standard 22nd February 1850: 'Catherine Wilde, an Irishwoman, was committed to prison for 13 days, with hard labour, in the house of correction at Warwick, for begging about the streets. The prisoner is one of those miserable persons who reside in the miserable houses in Leicester-street.'

Coventry Standard 24th May 1850: 'John Maclean, an Irishman, was charged with begging in High-street, and being convicted, he was sentenced to fourteen days imprisonment, with hard labour, in the house of correction.'

Coventry Herald 21st June 1850: 'Edward Fullis, a sturdy young Irishman, was brought up for begging, but discharged on promising to leave the town.'

Coventry Standard 13th December 1850: 'Catherine Callaghan was committed for trial at the sessions on a charge of stealing a piece of ribbon from the shop of Henry Wright, on the Burges.'

Coventry Standard 4th August 1854: John McIntyre committed for stealing one shilling and sixpence, the property of Mr. Henry Brown.

Coventry Standard 4th August 1854: John Hassett, aged 74, was charged with stealing two pairs of candlesticks, the property of Mr. Richard Russell. On 14th December 1849 the same paper had reported John was committed to appear at the Sessions on a charge of having stolen from a saw-pit, at Long Ithcington, two axes and offering them for sale in Coventry.

Coventry Times 5th January 1859 reported John Devannah was charged with stealing a pair of boots, the property of Michael Hogan. It turned out to be a drunken affair, and Hogan declined to appear, the prisoner was discharged.

Coventry Herald 24th August 1860: Edwin Hewson, a diminutive boy of ten years, was charged with stealing a cap, the property of Mr. Streetly of Broad-gate. It appeared that he had also stolen a cap from Mr. Lockitt, of Broad-gate. Since no one appeared to prosecute, he was discharged. His mother was cautioned to look after him and see that he was sent to school. He was a Coventry-born son of the late William Hewson (noted as a 28 year old Irish-born silk weaver, living in Chauntry Place in 1851).

Coventry Herald 10th November 1860 reported 'A ragged dirty Irishman, named James Hannan, was charged with stealing potatoes'. He told the magistrates 'If I could get back to Ireland I'd never trouble yer Honour no more. Father Pratt and Father Moore would help me go'. The magistrates postponed a decision pending on hearing from Father Pratt giving assistance out of the poor-box.

The *Coventry Herald* 5th July 1861 noted Hannah Gahagan (See also, below *Coventry Standard* 31st August 1861) was in custody accused of stealing a purse that contained £18 from general dealer, James Luggar's shop in Much Park Street.

Coventry Herald 6th September 1861 reported John Devine a little boy, about seven years of age, was brought up in custody, charged with throwing a stone that inflicted a severe wound on a butcher boy who was on an errand. His mother, an Irishwoman said the butcher's boy struck him first. The boy was discharged after being admonished by the Bench.

The *Coventry Herald* 20th February 1863 reported under the heading 'Juvenile Depravity' that nine year old Mary Moran 'who could scarcely look over the bar of the dock' was on Saturday charged with robbery after owning up to pick-pocketing on a number of occasions. Her mother, 'a decently-dressed Irish-woman was in Court, and seemed very much distressed'. She said she had lived in Coventry for twelve years and anyone who knew her or her husband would state they were of good character. The child was sent to the House of Correction for two weeks to be followed by five years in a reformatory.

Coventry Herald 20th June 1863 reported that an old Irishwoman Bridget Gallagan was brought up in custody for stealing a breast of mutton from a butcher in Smithford Street. The case was not pressed and she was released. Nearby in 8C3 Fleet Street in 1861 resided Roscommon-born Bridget Callaghan 67 years, wife of a Limerick-born farm labourer.

Coventry Herald 28th April 1871: 'Hawking Without a Certificate. - a woman named Mary O'Neil was brought up charged with this offence. -Mr Norris said he was not disposed to press the case if the defendant would promise not to offend again.- discharged.'

Coventry Standard 13th October 1871: Martin Grogan, aged 10, Well Street was sent to gaol for 28 days for stealing with a young companion, a pork pie from the shop of Edward Rollason, confectioner, Jordan Well.

Coventry Herald 24th January 1873: Margaret Gallaghan, 13 years of West Orchard was charged with stealing a dress value 14s. She pleaded guilty and as it was not her first offence she was sent to prison for three months.

Coventry Standard 20th November 1874 reported that James Thomas Harvey, of Well Street pleaded guilty and was committed to gaol for two months for stealing six watch movements and watchmaker's tools from Edward Kirby to whom he was apprenticed

Coventry Herald 25th December 1874: Mary Ryan, married woman, Greyfriars Lane charged with stealing boots on a number of occasions from the shop of William Coppen, Cross-cheaping.

Coventry Herald 15th January 1875: 'Charge of robbing a father.- Mark Morninghan a juvenile, was charged with stealing on the 7th inst., from the dwelling house of his father, Michael Monighan, 14, Grey Friars lane a pair of boots, value 1s. 6d. The father asked the magistrates to allow him to withdraw the charge, and the prisoner was cautioned and set at liberty'. (See Table A.17.1).

Coventry Herald 12th May 1875 reported Owen Grogan, labourer Well-street, was charged with neglecting to contribute towards the maintenance of his son John, whilst detained at a reformatory. John had been sent to a reformatory for five years in 1871, but Owen who was obliged to pay 1s a week had never made a payment.

Mary McCarthy, according to the *Coventry Standard* 5th January 1877 pleaded guilty, and was given three months hard labour, for stealing crockery and a valuable brooch, which she had pawned, while a charwoman to Sophia Knight, Hertford Street.

The *Coventry Times* 16th April 1879 told that Elizabeth Connor was summoned because a boy about 10 years had not attended school regularly for eighteen weeks. Elizabeth told the court she could not make the boy attend school. The court made an order that he was to attend St. Osburg's school. In the 1881 census she was a 50 year, Irish-born widow, charwoman, lodging in H4C1 Earls Street. She was found in the Workhouse in 1871 with a daughter, age 13, and a Warwick-born son John, age 1, who presumably was the boy in question.[4]

The *Coventry Herald* 15th February 1882 told of Julia Moran, aged 13, who was charged with stealing a silver watch. She was a daughter of labourer John and ribbon weaver Bridget Moran, both Irish-born who lived with their family in H6C2 New Buildings. On John promising to keep strict supervision over this daughter she was fined 10s.

<u>Later 'Irish' Rows, wrongdoing and familiar names</u>

Coventry Standard 16th March 1860: William Ryan, ragman, was charged with assaulting Michael Ryan. He admitted having committed the assault, but said the complainant "desarved" it. Fined 5s., and costs 10s. 6d.

Coventry Standard 27th April 1860: 'Drunken Irishman - John Devanni was charged with being drunk and disorderly in Earl Street. He was cautioned and released on putting a shilling into the poor-box.

[4] RG10/3178.125.4 Workhouse; RG11/3066.19.4 ED 2

The *Coventry Herald* 18th May 1860 reported PC Gadsby charged Thomas Duffy and Michael Sheridan with being drunk and disorderly at eleven o'clock on Sunday night in West Orchard. Gadsby stated that 'a number of Irish people were causing a great disturbance…Duffy said he was doing nothing but seeing a friend home. Gadsby stated, amid general laughter, that they were all "seeing each other home," and making a great noise about it. The version of events in *Coventry Standard* 18th May 1860 was less amusing: Irish Row,- Thomas Duffy and Michael Sheridan were brought up for making a disturbance in West Orchard. PC Gadsby said his attention was called to a row in West Orchard, and he went and endeavoured to repress it. He apprehended first one and then another, but they were rescued. Ultimately, with the assistance of other constables, he apprehended the two men in the dock. Ordered to put 2s, 6d, in the poor box.

Coventry Standard 17th August 1860: 'A Drunken Irishman. - Michael Trenan was brought up for being drunk in Broadgate.'

Coventry Herald 24th August 1860: 'Patrick Gaffey was charged with being disorderly in Well-street, at half-past twelve o'clock on Sunday morning. Police Constable 23 said he was on duty in Well-street at the time in question. The defendant and several other Irishmen were making a great disturbance, and he took the prisoner into custody. Defendant now expressed sorrow for his conduct, and was discharged on placing 1s. in the poor-box.' Michael Fenny and Michael Carr, two Irishmen were separately charged with creating a disturbance in Grey Friars'-lane at half past twelve on Saturday night. They were released on putting 1s. each into the poor-box.

The *Coventry Standard* 15th September 1860 reported 'Irish ROW. - Thomas Lynes, Bridget Lynes and Bridget Grogan were brought up for fighting in the Pilgrim-yard on Saturday night and were ordered to find a surety in £5 to keep the peace'.

Coventry Standard 21st September 1860: 'The Pleasure of a General Fight. - Martin Garrigan and Thomas Ruddy, Irishmen, were charged with being drunk and disorderly, in Much Park-street, on Sunday morning. Police Sergeant Iliffe said he was on duty near Much Park-street, when hearing a great disturbance he proceeded to the spot, and found the defendants and about thirty others indulging themselves in the pleasure of a general fight. The inhabitants of that part of the city made great complaints of this species of annoyance. The defendants were cautioned, and on placing 2s. 6d each in the poor-box, discharged.'

Coventry Herald 27th October 1860 reported that Bridget Lynes was charged with assaulting Bridget Cane in Brewery Street on Friday night. Lynes and her sister Ellen Kelly 'fell on the unoffending young lady tooth and nail, and denuded her head of any superfluous hair with which she might have been previously troubled'. The *Coventry Standard* of the same date reported the same incident as 'Hibernian Disputes' where Cain was abused by Lynes who attributed to her 'feline characteristics'. Lynes 'turned up her sleeves and evinced pugilistic intentions', and with her sister Mrs Kelley, both struck her. Defendants on a promise not to molest Cane again were released on paying expenses.

A classic 'Irish Row' with a gamut of 'Irish' connotation occurred in Caldicotts Yard. The *Coventry Standard* 2nd August 1861: 'Another Irish Row, Richard Gahagan, of Much Park-street was charged with breaking Darby Boyle's window in the same street – It appeared that there was a fierce Irish row on Saturday night, and a number of people took refuge in the house of Misther Boyle, "to save their lives". Gahagan, one of the

assailants, then broke sixteen panes of glass with a line prop. -Mr Holt, who appeared for the defence, called a witness who swore that the windows were broken by a brother of the complainant, who was using a pair of tongs by way of a double–action shillelagh, -PC Jackson (26) said he was sent for to [attend] the row, and found twenty Irishmen and several women fighting and throwing. The windows had been broken. He took Gahagan from the yard under his own protection. -Case dismissed; costs divided.'

Irish expressions such as 'to save their lives' or 'he killed me' were often provided in quotation marks to create amusement over what could be considered Irish irrationality. This report featured a capitalised heading that included words 'another' and 'row' which had negative Irish connotation. There was repetition of the words 'Irish row', which was given added vehemence by being described as 'fierce', and reference to 'Saturday night' implying the pay-day consumption of alcohol. There was faux respect shown to Boyle by referring to him as 'Mishter' while mockingly negating the word through mimicry. It contained a gratuitous reference to a shillelagh that was typically used as a weapon by the Irish. The mention, as was usual, of a precisely counted, large number involved, who were again referred to as Irishmen, added to the sense of extensive disorder while the mention of violent women added both intensity and impropriety to the 'fighting'. The *Coventry Herald* 2nd August 1861 also reported on the incident and provides a crosscheck on how authentic the *Standard* account had been. It was more factual but gave in to aping the words of Helena Boyle. According to the *Herald*, Darby Boyle's wife said 'a number of Irishmen came to her house at night, to get out a relative of hers [brother-in-law], who had taken refuge there, in order to murder him. She ran upstairs with her children, to "save their lives," when they broke the windows with line-props'. She was reluctant to speak of her relative's use of the tongs, remarking that she had thought she had done enough in protecting herself and the children and that the questioner should "ax the Gahagans". John Kelly, a labourer said it was Gahagan that broke the windows while a witness for the defence said it was Boyle's brother-in-law that had done the breaking. The report ended by saying defence evidence 'showed the affair to be a regular Irish row on a large scale'.

The census of 1861 (See Table 3.15) showed both men dwelled actually in Caldicotts Yard, West Orchard. Richard Gallagon, 28 years, Mayo-born labourer resided with his family living at 5C9, a few doors away from 10C9 where Darby Boyle, 37 years, Galway-born, agricultural labourer and his family lived.[5] Next door to Richard Gahagan/Gallagon at 4C9 resided, 20 year old, Mary Callaghan who according to the *Coventry Herald* 2nd August 1861 charged, 32 year old, Mary O'Donnell with assaulting her by throwing water over her. The row had started over O'Donnell calling Mary Callaghan's sister names; Callaghan stated that the defendant had been annoying her for some time. Both O'Donnell and Callaghan claimed the other wanted to initiate a fight and both sides called witnesses. O'Donnell was fined 1s. and costs 15s. 6d.

The *Coventry Standard* 31st August 1861: - 'Irish Assault, Hannah Gahagan, of Much Park-street was charged with assaulting Ellen Neary…Wednesday evening …at the Coach and Horses, where my brother and Mrs Gahagan's husband were card playing. They were quarrelling. I told them they ought to be ashamed of themselves, upon which the defendant becalled me, struck me, and spat in my face. Her husband turned her out, and a few minutes after she followed me to Mr. Ball's shop, abusing me, and struck me when we got there…The defendant was fined 2s.6d. and expenses.'

Irish Row was casually applied to small and large disturbances. The *Coventry Standard* 14th September 1861 under heading 'Irish Row' told how William Narey was charged

[5] RG09/2206.24-25.14-15 ED 2. In 1871 Darby was still in the same location while Richard had moved to Palmer Lane.

with being drunk and fighting in the High-Street on Saturday but was released as he did not give any trouble and had merely tried to prevent a fight between two others.

Coventry Herald 21st September 1861 reported Mrs Stott an Irishwoman residing in West Orchard was charged with assaulting Emma Flowers by pushing her in a violent manner. They were neighbours and there was ill-feeling between Stott and all other neighbours in the yard for some time. She was fined 1s. and 10s. in expenses.

The *Coventry Herald* 11th October 1861 reported in a capitalised introduction which assumed a link between the Irish and violence. It said 'Thoroughly Irish - Charles O'Donnell and Joseph O'Donnell two brothers' were in custody charged with a violent assault at Fletchampstead. They were 'Irish farm labourers' and while at work on a rick a quarrel broke out with the O'Donnells attacking William Garritty and 'beating him in a most brutal manner, one with a great iron ladle and the other with a pitchfork. Some idea of the violence used may be gathered from the fact that the pitchfork was broken over Garrittys head into several parts.' Both brothers were family men: Charles' details in 1861 are featured in Table 3.15. Joseph, 30 years was located at H2C4 New Buildings with his wife Mary, 25 year, both Irish-born, and their 6 year old Coventry-born Mary. Two Irish-born lodgers resided with the family and were most likely in-laws: Bridget Moren aged 50 years, a widow and Timothy Moren, 20 years an agricultural labourer. The brothers were remanded as due to Garritty being hospitalised the trial at Coventry County Sessions could not proceed. In the *Herald* a reminder of the postponement of the hearing was published on 19th October, under the heading, The Irish Fight at Fletchamstead; the same heading was again used on 26th to give notice that the case was being referred to Warwick Quarter Sessions where in the event both the O'Donnell brothers were sentenced to four months imprisonment with hard labour.[6] Charles continued to reside as an 'ag labourer' with his family in Coventry wherein he was located in Room7C8 West Orchard in 1871.[7] This incident was the only local one involving Irish that was serious enough to be sent to the Quarters Sessions during these years. Details above in the *Coventry Herald* 28th October 1859 suggest Garrity was known to the Grogans and was not a stranger in the area.

The *Coventry Standard* 11th October 1861 also reported the matter under the heading: An Irish Fight – A desperate encounter between Irishmen, employed by Mr Harris, of Fletchamstead took place on Monday evening last, and was the cause of no small degree of excitement in this city, from giving rise to a report that a murder had been committed. It seems that a number of Irishmen were at work in Mr. Harris's stack yard, and having refreshed themselves too copiously with beer, two of them, named William Garraty and Joseph O'Donnell, proceeded to engage in the highest point of Hibernian conviviality – a fight. An Irish fight implies the use of other weapons than those provided by nature, and for want of anything better, Garraty seized an iron bowl, which was ready to his hand, having been brought full of water to bathe another man who had fallen off the rick, with which he struck Joseph O'Donnell. Thereupon, Charles O'Donnell struck Garraty with a pitch fork. Whatever this blow might be as regarded the man, it was effectual in reference to the fork, which it broke in two parts. Not satisfied with that, however, both the O'Donnells stabbed Garraty with the fork tines.

Charles O'Donnell proclivity for violence was in evidence almost a quarter of a century later. The *Coventry Standard* 12th February 1875 reported that he was charged with committing 'an aggravated assault upon a little girl'. She was Mary O'Brien, aged 8 years and the offence was said to have occurred in a hovel in a garden in Coventry Park.

---

[6] HO27/133.174 Year 1861; *Coventry Herald* 3rd January 1862

[7] RG10/3179.23.6 ED 2

Might she be of the O'Brien family, Table 3.15 who lodged in the same Caldicott's Yard in 1861 as Charles O'Donnell.

Under a heading 'An Irish Row' the *Coventry Herald* 28th December 1861 reported Martin Gallagan and James Nickolls were charged with being drunk and disorderly on Saturday night at the bottom of White Friars' Street. They had been turned out of the public house at mid-night and began fighting as 'they were determined upon concluding the evening's enjoyment by a genuine Irish row'. Martin was a 31 year old from Mayo in 1861, while Nicholls, in lodgings, was a 23 year old agricultural labourer. The *Coventry Times* 25th December 1861 said they were fighting in a desperate manner and had cuts and bruises to show for it. 'Everybody that passed by they savagely assaulted …and after beating [one poor man] to the ground one of them bit a piece of flesh the size of a shilling out of his cheek'.

These were not high jinks in the Summer heat. They could occur at any time of year.
On 3rd January 1862 the *Coventry Herald* reported in a piece headed 'Christmas Games among the Irish' that Peter Mulhern was drunk and disorderly in Well Street. It appeared according to PC Quincey that 'there had been several rows in Well-street on the same evening among the low Irish residing in the neighbourhood', and Quincey was assaulted with a kitchen poker, tearing his coat and smashing his hat. Mulhern who was a 31 year old, unmarried shoemaker from Cork, lived at 11 Well Street in the 1861 census, had been charged on three previous occasions for similar offences.[8] Mulhern assaulted Quincey, while he had a Patrick Burn in custody, for being disorderly in Well-street, at about 8pm on a recent evening.
The same edition reported on 'Irish Christmas Games' where a Martin Jennings appeared in the witness box with several teeth missing and his broken arm in a sling to complain about Daniel Ellice violently assaulting him on the same evening. He found Ellice kicking at his door. When asked what he wanted Ellice replied: "It's you, you b--, that I want," and gave him a blow in the mouth, which knocked him down. As soon as he was down a number of others came round, and some began kicking and some beating him with their fists. The only provocation he had ever given the defendant was commencing in the shoe trade next door to Thomas Hennessy, by whom the defendant was employed. Hennessy was one of the persons who assaulted him, and Hennessy had sent him word three weeks ago that if he did not leave Well-street before Christmas was over he would make him remember it.' Jennings said he never threatened Ellice or went up and down the street carrying a poker or challenged Hennessy to a fight. Jennings said he employed four men; was a rag gatherer who bought old shoes in order to mend them and had opened a shop in Well-street to sell them. Hennessy was a shoemaker who also employed four men one of whom was Ellice 'who he believed was an Englishman. He had never kicked up a row with Hennessy because he employed an Englishman'. Several witnesses for the defence swore Jennings drunkenly began the row and had walked up and down with a poker on his shoulder threatening Hennessy and all his friends. The Magistrates said 'they were quite convinced that it was a regular Irish row, in which one party was as bad as the other. They therefore dismissed the case, the costs to be divided.'
In 1861 Martin Jennings, 38 years, Silk Thrum Dealer lived in H10C4 Palmer Lane with his wife Ann 25 years, both Irish-born, their three Coventry-born children, eldest 5 years, and Bridget Hogan 22 years a charwoman from Ireland.[9] At 11 Well Street Thomas Hennessey (Appendix 2), a 22 year old Irish-born master shoemaker, employing 7 men and 4 boys, lived with his wife, 20 years old, and 1m old son, both

[8] *Coventry Standard* 4th January 1862
[9] RG9/2207.57.11 ED 12

Coventrian-born, and his brother 16 years old, a shoemaker from Queens Co. It may be that Daniel Ellice was not the true name; a Daniel O'Connell shoemaker, is recorded as living at the address in 1861, a Dan McCarthy shoemaker was recorded in the workhouse in 1881 while a Dan Bury was recorded in 1851 in Well Street.
Allowing for the gap of some months between the census and the newspaper report it can be seen there is seamless interaction between Palmer Lane and nearby Well Street on the far side of The Burges.
Jennings was reported in the *Coventry Standard* 27th August 1875 as being before the Bench for being found lying drunk in the gutter.

The Irish could be wrongly blamed as the census indicated the two women in the following report had their birthplaces reversed in the newspaper report. The *Coventry Herald* 23rd May 1862 reported: Assault – Ann Hawkins, an Irish girl, was charged with assaulting Jane Murphy…by striking her with her fists. It would appear Hawkins was an 18 year old servant from Deddington, Oxfordshire.

Coventry Herald 6th June 1862: Mysterious.- 'Michael Ryan was charged with violently assaulting his wife on Monday night'. PC Gadsby receiving information that a man was 'killing his wife', found the 'prisoner beating his wife in a fearful manner' in a house in Grey Friars'-lane. 'The woman (an Irishwoman) [brackets in newspaper] appeared this morning, and in the most solemn manner declared that her husband never did wrong to her in his life.' She said she suffered from fits and was having one which caused the disturbance just as the policeman came up. The Magistrate dismissed the case. The *Coventry Standard* version was that Mrs Ryan was found apparently senseless by the constable. She later told Gadsby that her husband struck her, and '[she] was shamming to put him about'.

Coventry Standard 7th June 1862: Philip Harrity was charged for being drunk and disorderly in Well Street. He was fighting with another man in the Malthouse yard and a disorderly crowd gathered. This was his tenth offence for which he was sentenced to seven days' imprisonment, with hard labour. The *Herald* 6th June 1862 said 'Harrity was without his shirt in fighting attitude. There was between three and four hundred people round.'

Coventry Standard 12th July 1862: 'Disorderly Irishman, Owen Grogan was brought up for fighting and making a disturbance in Well-street on Saturday night.' Ordered to find sureties to keep the peace for three months or go to gaol in default.

Coventry Standard 13th September 1862: 'Irish Row'-Four men, named Richard, Mark, James and Thomas Gahagan, were brought up and charged with being drunk, and assaulting PC Gadsby in Much Park Street'.
'PC Gadsby… on that morning about two o'clock …heard a great noise up a court…and found the defendants and others fighting on the ground, Women were there screaming. Unable to part them, he seized one, and several of them set on him. Other policemen came to his assistance. The defendants broke everything in the house in which they were staying. One of them (James) tore his coat, and they kicked and fought him. They knocked him against the wall, and one of them fetched a poker…PC Wood said…the prisoners were all covered with blood and everything was split up. Mark was the man who was before the bench on Monday, and who was forgiven his costs by the magistrates' clerk. The mayor reprimanded him severely for his bad conduct after this kindness, and sentenced each of the prisoners to pay a fine and costs amounting to £1.8s.6d., or, in default, to be imprisoned for twenty eight days with hard labour.'

(Of the above James Gahagan, the *Coventry Standard* 22nd October 1875 reported that when he admitted he was drunk in Gosford Street the bench noted he had been before them on seven occasions in a very short period.)
The same incident was given an amusing 'Irish' flourish in the *Coventry Herald* 13th September 1862: 'A Band of Brothers. - Richard Gahagan, James Gahagan, Mark Gahagan, and Thomas Gahagan, Irishmen were charged with assaulting PC Gadsby while in the execution of his duty, in Much Park-street, on Tuesday morning last, about two o'clock. It appeared from the evidence of Gadsby and PC Wood that the men with others of their country were amusing themselves by a social "scrimmage" in a house in Much Park-street. They had broken every article of furniture over each others' heads, until scarcely a bit remained larger than a man's hand. The grate was pulled into the middle of the room, and the men were so smothered with blood that it was difficult to distinguish one from the other. As soon as PC Gadsby appeared they all set upon him, tore his coat, and ill-treated him in a desperate manner. Afterwards PC Wood arrived, and with his assistance the men were taken to the Station House. Although every one of the men bore unmistakeable marks of the affray, two of them had witnesses ready to swear they were in bed and asleep at the time. The Magistrates did not think it necessary that these witnesses should be called. They had no doubt as to the guilt of the persons, and ordered each to pay a penalty of 20s. and costs. In default they were to be committed to the House of Correction with hard labour for 28 days.'

Coventry Herald 31st October 1862: Police constable Frankton explained to the magistrates that he took James Nicholls into custody because he was creating a great drunken disturbance in Butcher Row with Philip Harrity and refused to go away when told. Also in attendance was Henry Wright who charged Nicholls with assaulting him. He told how he was getting in a load of coal when Nicholls and another man ran against the mare's head. When he spoke to them about, it he was set upon in a very ferocious manner, one of them biting him through the cheek, near the eye. The marks inflicted on his eye and cheek could still be seen. A witness for the defendant swore that Wright had called Nicholls 'a clumsy Irish b---," and assaulted him first. The magistrates fined Nicholls 5s. and 9s. 6d expenses.

Coventry Herald 21st March 1863 'Drunk and Disorderly, - James Harvey, an Irishman was charged with being drunk and disorderly, the previous night in Well Street. Mr Norris said, the man had been many times before the Court to answer to similar charges, and although the previous day was St. Patrick's Day, it was hardly an excuse for the man disturbing the peace of the whole neighbourhood. PC Gregory heard a great row down the Kiln Gate House yard and saw the prisoner and two other Irishmen drunk and fighting furiously with tongs and poker and one of the men had a bench.' Harvey asked the magistrate to see the fight as a 'scrimmage' He was imprisoned for seven days.

Coventry Times 25th March 1863: 'The Irish Fracas, Owen Grogan, Michael Brennan and Richard Brennan, all natives of "Green Erin" were charged with being drunk and disorderly in Well-street. Only Grogan appeared to answer the summons.

The *Coventry Standard* 30th January 1864 reported that Catherine Raby was charged with being disorderly in Much Park Street. PC Rollason said there was 'a row between the English and the Irish in Much Park Street on Saturday Night. The Irish persisted in continuing the disturbance, and the defendant, being one of the worst, was taken into custody.' A Catherine Raby could not be identified in the 1861 census but Court 17 Much Park Street contained 5 houses - H3: James Raby and family, H2: John Sheridan from Mayo and family, and H1: Elizabeth Connor from Roscommon and family.

Around the corner in Brick Kiln Lane at No 8 lived Joseph Locton Sanders from Dublin and family while William Raby and family lived at No 6.

Coventry Standard 15th September 1865: Bridget Miller charged Martin Gallaghan with stealing a pair of boots. It appeared the parties had been living together for some time, but Bridget was now anxious to get rid of Martin, and charged him with the theft. He had apparently pledged the boots without her permission. She declined to prosecute and he was discharged.

The *Coventry Standard* 13th July 1866 reported Austen Rowan and Martin Galagan were charged with fighting in Palmer Lane between two and three on Sunday morning. PC wood found a dozen or fifteen persons all fighting. With broken up line props. Rowan who was described as a well conducted man, was discharged on putting 1s. in the poor box while Galaghan, described as an old offender, was bound to the peace for three months having posting sureties and recognizances of £30. John Sherden was similarly bound to the peace after telling the court he was trying to make the peace between the parties. The true colours of Austen Rowan (Ryan) 'the well-conducted man' would emerge in subsequent years.

In the *Coventry Standard* 27th July 1867 it was noted Thomas Gahagan, was convicted and fined for assaulting PC Carpenter in Much Park Street after he had struck the constable, whose hat 'was destroyed by the mob and his coat torn'. Thomas was a Mayo labourer in his mid-twenties who was recorded with his brother Richard as lodgers of frequently mentioned labourer Owen Grogan, and his wife, both Irish-born living in Fleet Street in 1851. Thomas was before the court again as reported in the *Coventry Herald* 15th December 1871 when he pleaded guilty to assaulting Michael Harvey. He struck Harvey in the Spotted Dog, Butcher Row, after saying to him that he sent an innocent man to gaol. Thomas left but returned with Martin Gahagan, who was just out of gaol, and he assaulted the complainant. Harvey had been a witness against Martin Gahagan in a recent trial which had seen Gahagan sent to prison for two months for letting 'some beer run off in Hales Street'. The Bench said it was serious offence because it would defeat justice if witnesses could be assaulted. Thomas was fined 20s. with costs 10s. 6d. The *Coventry Standard* 17th February 1871 reported that Thomas Gahagan was involved in a quarrel in the Wheat Sheaf Inn, West Orchard, during which Samuel Oliver, a hawker was severely kicked about the head and shortly afterwards died. Gahagan absconded and had not been since heard of.

Coventry Standard 8th August 1868: Drunk and Disorderly.- James Harvey was charged with being drunk and disorderly. The defendant said he was sorry he had misbehaved himself, but he had had too much drink…As there was a person in Court about to apply for a summons against the defendant, for a very serious assault upon his wife, the bench fined him 2s. 6d., costs 8s. 6d and in default he was committed to prison for 14 days; a summons was granted for his apprehension at the expiration of that time for the assault.

Coventry Standard 15th October 1869: 'Bad language. - Peter Lyons, who said he was an Irishman, was charged with using bad and disgusting language, in Bishop-street, at twelve o'clock on the previous night'. He was fined 2s. 6d., and expenses 8s. 6d.

The *Coventry Herald* 27th May 1870 reported the charging of Patrick Brennan, where he was referred to as an Irish labourer, with being drunk and disorderly in Cox Street where he shouted and made great noise. He was not to be found in census forms though

it will be recalled a Patrick Brannan was before the court on 13th January 1860 for being part of a group that was disorderly at a christening in Caldicott's Yard.

Coventry Standard 18th November 1870: 'Drunk.- Margaret Devanny was charged with being drunk and incapable of taking care of herself in Much Park street…The defendant, who is a widow with six children, had been rolling about in a beastly state of intoxication. She had been before the magistrates only 14 days previously, and upon former occasions as well. Her children, Mr. Norris said, were fearfully neglected. She was fined 5s. and costs'. In 1861, 28 year old Margaret from Galway was married to 29 year old John Devaney a rag gatherer from Mayo. They had four Coventry-born children. In 1871 Margaret was widowed pauper in the Workhouse with her 3 year old daughter.

Coventry Herald: 31st March 1871: James Harvey and James Gahagan were summoned by a constable who heard a great noise in Much Park Street and found both struggling together and using bad language.

In July 1871 James Harvey of C2H2 Well Street pleaded guilty and was fined for keeping pigs too close to a dwelling house.[10] In December 1873 he was before the court for falsely accusing someone of stealing his watch and then threatening him.[11] In July 1874, now living as a marine store dealer in Chauntry Place, he appeared before the bench, with a black eye, charged with causing a breach of the peace at the Wagon and Horses Inn, Well Street. He had not been long out of prison and this was his twenty first appearance in court. He was a 41 years old hawker who lived with his wife Hannah who was the same age, also from Ireland, and with their three Coventry-born sons – the eldest being Michael who was 21 years. Of him the *Coventry Herald* 28th November 1873 reported with a heading: 'Charge of Assaulting a Mother', that he was a labourer from Chauntry Place, who had been on remand, and had pleaded not guilty to a charge of violently assaulting his mother Hannah. She said that 'he has been a good lad to me and I don't wish to press the charge against him. I aggravated him. I was in a temper. He has been punished enough by being away from home.' He received a caution. In *Coventry Standard* 23rd April 1875 Harvey (no longer referred to as an Irishman) was before the bench on a charge of being drunk, resisting PC Wormwald and spitting in his face. Harvey said he would go to America if let off. The Mayor told Harvey this was his 21st appearance in court; he was sent to gaol for three months with hard labour. A mere two years later Harvey featured in a report in the *Coventry Standard* 18th May 1877 where it was said he was a violent man and had threatened a George Cooper that he would 'double him up'. This was his twenty sixth appearance in court.

In the *Coventry Standard* 1st December 1871 it was recounted that Michael Gibbons, an Irish labourer was charged for being drunk in Broadgate. According to the constable 'he was hooting and shouting and endeavouring to force his way into the City Hotel'. This was his fifth appearance in court. He was fined 5s. and costs 8s. 6d. with 7 days in gaol for non-payment. Gibbons does not appear to have lived locally and was possibly from Stourbridge. In September 1874 Gibbons and Patrick Mortimer jointly pleaded guilty to being drunk and disorderly in Palmer Lane, while Mortimer was again before the court in November 1874, where being convicted of being drunk and disorderly, and as an old offender, he was sent to prison for two weeks.[12]

[10] *Coventry Standard* 21st July 1871; RG10/3179.35.2 ED 3
[11] *Coventry Herald* 5th December 1873
[12] *Coventry Standard* 18th September 1874, 13th November 1874;

In July 1874, Michael, Edward and Philip Harrity were named in the *Standard* under the heading 'Irish Brethren Using Dangerous Weapons'. In a drunken infuriated state, armed with pokers, they violently attacked a Peter Green in Well Street. This was the third offence by 'Teddy' [Edward], while 'Micky' [Michael] was reminded by the Mayor that 'he was an old offender who had lived a dissipated life for the past 21 years'. They were bound to the peace for six months and are referred to in Table 3.18.[13]

Coventry Herald 9th October 1874: 'Drunk in a Public House. John Gallaghan labourer was charged with being drunk and disorderly in the Rose Inn, Well Street'. He was fined 5s., and costs, 12s 6d.

The *Coventry Standard* 17th December 1875 reported that Patrick Caulfield, a labourer residing in Well-Street, was charged with assaulting his wife Bridget. She did not wish the case to be pressed; what she required was that the prisoner should be kept away from her.

Coventry Times 2nd February 1876: James Harvey of Palmer lane was ordered to keep the peace for three months, on a charge of using threats to his wife. Mary Ryan of Palmers lane was summoned for assaulting an old woman named Burke. She was convicted and fined.

Coventry Times 9th July 1876: Michael Harrity involved in a fight with George Thomas and his son Joseph. A witness told the court that it was about five o'clock and Harrity was coming down the yard, very much in beer. He said he would go and fight Mr Thomas and she begged him not to do so. A Mr. Norris called the attention of the Magistrates to the rows that had recently taken place in Well-street. The Magistrates decided that the disturbance was brought on by Harrity's conduct and he was bound to the peace for six months.

Coventry Herald 22nd September 1876: Mark Burns, labourer, Palmer Lane was charged with violently assaulting his wife Mary Ann. 'Her husband came home in the evening worse for drink. She placed the supper on the table, and when the prisoner had had it he picked up a candlestick and threw it at her. She did not know if it had struck her until she saw the blood spurting over the child; afterwards she found that her head was badly cut, and she had to obtain medical attendance. The Bench committed the prisoner to gaol for three months.' The *Herald* 25th May 1877 reported with the headline 'Assaulting a Wife' that Burns was 'brought up in custody (having failed to appear to a summons), and charged with assaulting his wife, Mary Ann, on the 5th inst. - The prisoner pleaded guilty. - The Magistrates, remarking that he had been three times previously before the Court, committed the prisoner to gaol for three calendar months with hard labour.' The *Standard* reported on the 7th December of the same year that Burns was charged with again assaulting his wife by striking her and knocking her down. He had inflicted several bruises upon his wife, and although she wished to give her husband another trial, the Bench said that he was an old offender and he would be committed to gaol for one month with hard labour.

The *Coventry Standard* 26th January 1877 told that Martin Grogan, a labourer in Well Street was found guilty of using obscene language in public, the previous month, and as he was a 'man of bad character' he was sentenced to 28 days with hard labour. Mary Grogan pleaded guilty to using obscene language 7 days earlier in Well Street. She said

[13] Ibid. 17th July 1874, 24th July 1874

her husband provoked her by 'going with another woman' and was fined 5s and costs 11s 6.

Coventry Times 21st March 1877: 'Martin Grogan, of Well-street, a militia-man was charged with being drunk and disorderly, on the Burges, on the 16th inst.- Mr Norris said defendant was an old customer of theirs.'

Coventry Times 30th May 1877: Martin Jennngs, of Well street, general dealer, was charged with being drunk and disorderly. The constable said he had created a very great disturbance by violent conduct both in and outside his own house. Fined 5s., and costs, 8s. 6d., or 14 days in prison.

Coventry Times 26th September 1877. Austin Ryan, labourer, Well Street pleaded guilty to being drunk and disorderly in Silver street. As this was his 7th appearance he was fined 20s. and costs.

Coventry Times 4th June 1879: 'Martin Grogan of Well street, labourer, was summoned for being drunk and using obscene language in Well street and resisting his lawful apprehension.' The report continued that in court he said he was very sorry, but he was drunk. The mayor said he always seemed sorry when in that Court but he failed to carry out his promises of amendment. Grogan was fined £2. and costs or two months with hard labour.

Coventry Times 3rd September 1879: 'A Well Known Character, - Martin Grogan 8c, Well-street, labourer, was charged with having been drunk…and fighting in Greyfriars'-lane.' The Bench reminded the prisoner who pleaded guilty that his reputation was a very bad one and ordered him to find one surety in £10 for his good behaviour for three months or to serve the same time in gaol.

Coventry Times 24th March 1880: Martin Grogan who had been previously convicted nine times pleaded guilty to the charge of behaving in a disorderly manner in Greyfriars'-lane.

Coventry Herald 25th June 1880: Patrick Ryan, labourer, St. Agnes lane, charged with using obscene language in Greyfriars Lane. Case dismissed

The *Coventry Herald* 8th October 1880 reported Thomas Hogan was disorderly in the Bell Inn, Greyfriars Lane, and struck the constable who took him into custody a violent blow to the eye. Hogan claimed the blow was accidental and was fined 20s. and costs 8s. 6d. Hogan was not identified in the census, but a search among those named Hogan indicates many were born by 1880 in Britain and so it can no longer be assumed for the later century that a name regarded as Irish, belongs to an Irish-born.

Coventry Herald 25th March 1881: Austin Ryan complainant said on the night of the election Richard Foster caught hold of him from behind and threw him on the ground, spraining his wrist. Witnesses said Ryan who was drunk, came to the door with a poker, and whilst flourishing the poker in an exciting manner over-balanced himself and fell. The Bench dismissed the case.

The *Coventry Herald* 27th January 1882 stated William O'Neil a labourer of Court 10 Well Street was drunk and disorderly in High Street. He said he had no money to pay the fine and costs of 11s. When asked if he had any goods that might be sold to achieve

that sum he said ‘There is not so much as a crow would fly away with in the house. Sir’. On hearing that in default, he was to be sent to prison for a week he replied ‘All right! While I am there I shall be doing nothing else’. The census of 1881 showed William as a 50 year old pedlar from Armagh. Living with him were three adult daughters all cotton spinners, a 20 year old son James who was a watch finisher and a grand daughter – all Coventry-born.

Coventry Herald 29th September 1882: Patrick Ryan, 32 New-buildings summoned for fighting in the ‘Godiva Vaults’ Smithford Street. Ordered to keep the peace for three months.

Appendix 5

Local and visiting Preachers

Local preachers

The writings of two local preachers who published views on Catholicism are here displayed to illustrate the anti-Catholic frame of mind and to show the range of matters that exorcised it. These tracts included their disapproving view: of the Catholic clergy assuming it had the sole right to doctrinal interpretation, the veneration of saints and the greed of the clergy. John Gordon (1807-1880), a Unitarian preacher, gave five lectures on Protestantism in the Great Meeting House Coventry in 1842.[14] These expressed the view that Christian salvation is obtained through the use of reason with the individual at liberty to form their own spiritual guidance through reading scripture which was according to Gordon the only record of revelation. They declared that there should not be submission to ecclesiastical institutions - Church of England, or Roman Catholic Church, who claimed, falsely in his view, an authority to interpret and instruct, with the latter church, again in his view, deceitfully claiming infallibility. He was prepared to allow the merits of the Roman Catholic Church, but threaded throughout his complimentary remarks, was barely concealed criticism of its requirements and operation.

> 'Let us first notice the spread of Catholicism…traced, in no small degree, to the real worth and attractiveness of Romanism, acting under the more equitable circumstances in which it is placed. It is folly to suppose that the principle of submission to authority which it upholds does not meet with much favour in many minds. Men are induced to yield to it, not only by their religious indifference, but by the feeling of veneration which religion itself is calculated to excite. The Church of Rome appeals to that feeling, not merely by means of its arbitrary claims, but also by the union of mystery and splendour which distinguishes its administrations. And when it has thus captivated the devotional tendencies of human nature, the reasoning which it discourages is regarded by those in whom such tendencies are highly developed as an unholy interference with the exercises of piety. It would, moreover, be worse than folly not to allow to the Roman catholic church much moral merit. It has in its hands the essential truth and goodness which attach to every form of Christianity. The persecution to which it has been subjected and the suspicion which is exercised with regard to it, have imparted to its ministers and members a circumspection and diligence which have drawn forth its moral energies to the greatest possible degree. The civil and social wrongs its has suffered, contrasted with the excellency it has displayed, have produced a general sympathy in its favour…The civil freedom which it has obtained [Emancipation] has shaken the bugbear notions which were entertained with respect to it - has lifted it from a position of disgrace nearer to the level of honourable equality - and by raising the hopes has doubled the efforts of its adherents…But this increase also appears in another form. The Anglican Catholicism which the authors of the Oxford Tracts have originated, comes again under our notice….the essentially distinctive principles of each [Anglican Catholicism and Roman Catholicism] are alike. There is the same submission to priestly authority required - the same importance attached to external rites - the same attempts to veil religion in mysteries - the same dependence placed upon

[14] He was still Unitarian Minister in 1851 according to the Religious Census. He left Coventry for Edinburgh in 1854. Later in life he returned and settled in Kenilworth.

> sensible attractions. There is the same suppression of the exercise of individual reason and conscience.'[15]

He referred to the historical Roman Catholic Church, and while pointing out that in so doing he did not allude to the Romanism of his time, he left planted in the mind of the reader a strong distaste for how the Roman Catholic Church had assumed authority in former times. Norman noticed that such tracts drew supporting evidence 'from centuries past but asserted as if of contemporary reality'.[16] Gordon complained about the clergy rather than the church wielding power, the superstition by which that power was fostered, 'the wealth it grasped; the extensive range of its interference; and the secularity with which it was administered'. He saw as superstition the Roman churches claim of supernatural authority and profession of divinity and stated that:

> 'The splendid ceremonies which it conducted were intended to be outward manifestations of its connexion with the Deity. The mysterious dogmas it enforced… Infallibility, transubstantiation, purgatory, saint-worship, absolution…rests upon a claim of supernatural prescription and influence which belongs [only] to the church. He described an example of its ability to interfere through the addition of 'innumerable prescriptions of a purely arbitrary character, fasts and feasts, prayers and penances, vows and pilgrimages, postures and gestures. From the constant pressure of one or other of these things it was impossible to escape. Under such circumstances guilt of some kind could never be avoided.'[17]

In the writings of Gordon there was no reference to the Irish. Care must be taken not to assume that he was unsympathetic to, or ignorant about Irish matters. He had attended the O'Connell meeting in 1844 where he spoke about the unfair trial of O'Connell and he had visited Dublin in May 1849 as a guest preacher of the Irish Unitarian Society.[18] Gordon left Coventry for Edinburgh in 1854 so his influence diminished.

More pointed, sensational and accusatorial was Henry Townsend Powell (1800-1854) who was Church of England vicar of Stretton-on-Dunsmore about six miles south west of Coventry. He was the author of several tracts some of which were printed in Coventry and whose titles indicate his outlook: 'Roman Fallacies and Catholic Truths', 'Nuns and Nunneries', 'The Merchandise of Souls: or the Money Method of Salvation in the Church of Rome' and 'The Short Catechism of Roman Idolatry'. In 'The Merchandise of Souls' he published a series of letters to the Roman Catholics of nearby Princethorpe (which were also published in the *Coventry Standard*) in which he castigated the Catholic clergy, who he saw as 'in reality swindlers obtaining money under false pretences either for themselves, or the Roman Church', by telling those about to die that there would be a beneficial effect on their soul if they gave money to a religious or charitable purpose. He saw 'devotees wheedled out of their property under the false pretences that sacrifices will redeem sins, and obtain a better or quicker transit for the soul from earth to heaven'.[19] In the 'The Short Catechism of Roman Idolatry' he set forth what he saw as the great peril in Church of England adherents becoming Roman Catholics. He described integral Catholic practices as idolatry: giving Divine honour to creatures by worshipping Saints and Angels, but especially of the Virgin Mary; worshipping relics, especially 'The wood of the cross'; honouring images, but

---

[15] John Gordon, *Protestantism, Five Lectures Delivered in the Great Meeting-House, Coventry*, (London 1842) pp. 111-113

[16] Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England*, p. 19

[17] John Gordon, *Protestantism, Five Lectures*, pp. 55-61

[18] *Dublin Evening Post* 17th May 1849. A successor who arrived in 1860 was Rev. George Heaviside (1838-1914). He was associated with the Liberal Party and spoke knowledgeably of the need justice for Ireland. (*Coventry Herald* 15th April 1887, *Coventry Times* 13th February 1889).

[19] Henry Townsend Powell, *The Merchandise of Souls: or the Money Method of Salvation in the Church of Rome*, (London 1845) pp. 19, 21, 29

especially crosses and crucifixes as images of Christ; and in the adoration of the Host which, according to him, arose out of the fable of transubstantiation.[20] The teachings on transubstantiation, auricular confession, purgatory and the veneration of images were seen as mere Catholic Church promulgation without authenticity, as they were not mentioned in the Bible. Townsend Powell, similar to Gordon, strongly objected to what he saw as the authoritarian requirement of Catholics to submit to the Church's teaching and not be permitted to use reason, common sense and search of Scripture to shape a personal belief.[21]

It is obvious that anti-Catholic views were in the Coventry air, but this appears to be the extent of anti-Catholic voicing that occurred. Other than the general allusion above to the 'spread of Catholicism' there is no criticism on record, centred on the building of St. Osburg's, which was the manifestation of 1840s Catholic expansion in Coventry. What influence these writers had on local opinion is difficult to ascertain, given their views were publicly available particularly to readers of the *Coventry Standard*. These thoughts would have been aired in Gordon's Great Meeting-House, where in 1851 the congregation numbered 245 with a further 190 scholars in attendance. Perhaps Dissenting Gordon was just perceived as an opinionated minority preacher whose criticism of all ecclesiastical corporations was too radical for the wider city. Townsend Powell may have been regarded by Coventrians with less relevance because he ministered in the shire rather than in the city. Their polemics were doctrinal and disputatious and may have gone over the heads of common people. Some of the public may have decided not to be influenced by religious bombast, regarding it part of the theatrics of preachers. The tracts were dense, though succinct inflammatory phrases such as 'Now look at the Roman creed. It is a collection of Popish falsehoods…' were to be readily found.[22] The prejudice appeared not to have been directed against those raised as Catholics although indirectly it did. The tactic of Townsend Powell in order to publicise his views was for him to feel compelled to respond to 'unwearied attacks from the inmates' of St. Mary's Priory, Princethorpe (A nearby Benedictine convent). Both preachers were more critical of Roman Catholic clerical power and its demand for unquestioned obedience to its pronouncements, than critical of its adherents who they saw as duped.

Townsend Powell's target was the Catholic Church and in that regard on O'Connell's death, the *Coventry Standard* 18th June 1847 included a letter about Daniel written to the Roman Catholics of Stretton-on-Dunsmore. Writing an open letter to the local Catholics was, as noted above, a device he used to introduce his views. He began 'My dear Roman Catholic Parishioners, I hope I may be able to prevail upon you to favour me with your kind attention while I address some observations to you on certain remarkable events in the life of the late Mr. O'Connell. After establishing that O'Connell was held in high regard by Catholic bishops, he then proceeded to show, in his view, how flawed was the character the episcopate admired and who they regarded as one of the beloved sons of the Church of Rome. To demolish the integrity of O'Connell he explained how he had broken each of the Ten Commandments. Reference to his reasonings on four should amply illustrate. He wrote that the whole system of Catholic agitation, or, more properly speaking, of Rebellion, was he said in Protestant eyes, a breach of the Fifth commandment. He continued: 'The Sixth commandment forbids murder. Now, besides the many murders which O'Connell doubtless gave birth to by his system of agitation, it is asserted he killed Mr. D'Esterre in a duel; and not long afterwards was engaged…with Mr. Peel…'. 'With respect to the Seventh

[20] Henry Townsend Powell, *The Short Catechism of Roman Idolatry*, (London 1842) p. 6
[21] Henry Townsend Powell, *Vicars Appeal to his Roman Catholic Parishioners in reply to Mr. Wilberforce's Farewell Letter*, (Coventry 1851) pp. 9,10
[22] Henry Townsend Powell, *Roman Fallacies and Catholic Truths*, (London 1841) p. 198

commandment, it is asserted that even in old age O'Connell seduced and abandoned more than one frail member of the fair sex. With reference to the Eight commandment, he is accused of having taken bribes from the millowners of Lancashire to speak against all short time bills in the House of Commons.'

An extract from a review in '*The Episcopal Magazine*' of 1840, of Townsend Powell's last mentioned publication leaves no doubt as to the existence of an audience for his polemical tracts, the level of intensity which anti-Catholic bitterness could attain, and how Irish migrants could be disparagingly introduced into a tirade. The reviewer decried the greed of the Irish clergy who he said charged for their ministrations:

> 'These taxes are not voluntary offerings; they are extorted by working on the superstitious fears of the people, and by the dexterous management and applications of the terrors of purgatory. But purgatory itself is a mine of wealth, of which there are clubs to supply the cupidity of the priests, who allow the poor to suffer the torments of that imaginary place without showing any pity, unless the money is forthcoming. Besides, the different orders of monks fleece the impoverished laity for scapulars and different societies, so that the poor in that part of Ireland where popery is rampant are ground down to the pitiable state of poverty which is to be witnessed when the barbarians come over to reap our fields and impregnate our labourers with their immorality and crime. Popery is such a vile imposition, such a mass of corruption…'[23]

Townsend Powell died in the same year Gordon left Coventry.

Anti-Catholic attitudes, local contra-Catholic organisations and visiting preachers

Wolffe explained that the Protestant reaction to Catholicism was not only a response to the increasing number of Catholics from Ireland, the swift building of churches, but also the belief that Protestants were being converted.[24] Dare the reforming social worker in Leicester appeared non-sectarian but he disliked the Tractarian behaviour of a local vicar who was 'going himself and trying to lead others to Rome'.[25] Nor was it helped as Wolffe observed that Catholics in order to boost their confidence permitted the fiction of increased conversions to continue.[26] The brash announcements by Cardinal Wiseman at the restoration of the Hierarchy gave an opportunity to those who wished to be offended. Bates remarked that Wiseman 'scarcely eased Anglican sensitivities by gleefully anticipating the rapid reconversion of the country to its old allegiance'.[27]

According to Wolffe almost fifty Protestant Association branches were formed between 1836 and 1844 which included ones in Hinckley and Leicester. In 1847 a branch consisting of fourteen members was formed in Birmingham. Over the following year this branch increased its membership to approximately seventy. In March 1849 seventeen clergy were recorded as vice-presidents while in July 1849 membership had doubled with three hundred people attending a meeting. With Thomas Ragg as its secretary it distributed tracts and published the *Protestant Watchman* monthly which reached a circulation of 3,000. There was not an increase in membership in subsequent

---

[23] *The Episcopal Magazine, and Church of England Warder* No XXIII November (London 1840) pp. 605-609

[24] Wolffe, *Protestant Crusade in Great Britain*, p. 116

[25] Jack Simmons, A Victorian Social Worker: Joseph Dare and the Leicester Domestic Mission, in *Transactions Leicestershire Archaeological and History Society*, (1970-71) Vol. 46 p. 75 https://www.le.ac.uk/lahs/downloads/SimmonsSmPagesfromvolumeXLVI-6.pdf

[26] Wolffe, *Protestant Crusade in Great Britain*, p. 116

[27] Stephen Bates, *Penny Loaves & Butter Cheap, Britain in 1846*, (London 2014) p. 207; Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England*, pp. 111-157 provided a useful outline of Wiseman's personality and administration.

years though lectures continued to be well attended.[28] The Protestant Association in Birmingham according to Kiernan, was critical of the Pope who was seen as re-imposing a tyranny that Britain was free of since the Reformation. It was concerned the Catholic Hierarchy was formally establishing a religion that was 'hostile to the intellectual advancement of the people' as it 'inculcated and enforced superstitious principles and practices, requiring its members to take its teaching on trust without reason or enquiry, that forbade the free and unrestricted circulation of the Bible'.[29] Paz mentioned that in the judgement of the Scottish Reformation Society, Birmingham was home to "some of the most zealous Protestants in the empire". He referred to Thomas Ragg as being particularly active.[30] A sufficient illustration here of his passion is the salient contents of two adjacent advertisements in *Ari's Birmingham Gazette* 22nd September 1851 (Exclamation marks, parentheses, bold print and format as in advertisements):

PROTESTANTISM!!!
Three lectures will be delivered by the Rev. Brewin Grant, in the Town Hall on Tuesday 23rd and subsequent Tuesdays. Lecture the 1st, THE SHAM PETER, CALLED "THE POPE." Lecture the 2d, THE SHAM CHURCH, called "THE INFALLIBLE." Lecture the 3d, THE SHAM BIBLE, DOUAY, TRADITION, &c.; being the Three Lectures which Dr Newman should have delivered to finish his course of twelve. Tickets may be had of Mr. Ragg, 90, High-Street [and two others].

"FATHER GAVAZZI"
The BIRMINGHAM PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION respectfully announce that Signor Alessandro Gavazzi commonly called "FATHER GAVAZZI." Will deliver a LECTURE in the TOWN HALL, on FRIDAY EVENING October 17. On "The CLAIMS of ITALY to a FULL MEASURE of RELIGIOUS LIBERTY." Tickets may be had of Mr. T. Ragg, 90, High-Street.

Brewin Grant, referenced in the advertisement above, preached at Well Street Chapel, Coventry in April 1849 according to a discrete advisory notice in the *Herald*. It is unknown whether he preached in the same vein as he did later in Birmingham, or whether he became embittered against Catholicism in the meantime - the hostility toward recreation of the Hierarchy had in that time intensified - or whether Ragg had hyped-up the advertisement to attract attention.[31] Description of the attitude and strength of the Birmingham Association serves to illustrate the religious tension-creating activity that was avoided in Coventry through it not having a branch of the Protestant Association. A letter in the *Coventry Herald* 14th December 1866 signed 'A Protestant Churchman' sought interest in establishing a Protestant Association in Coventry. He believed that such an association was required to counteract what he saw as the present dangers from ritualism in the Church of England (though he said ritualism was not practiced in Coventry outside of Hill Street) which aided the influence of the Romish apostacy which was 'the great enemy of souls'. There were no reports of any development on foot of this request. However impassioned preachers brought the same message as that of the Association to the town. Coventry did not receive a visit from Gavazzi until 1854, at which time he also visited Leicester. The *Coventry Herald* 5th May 1854 reported that St. Mary's Hall was crowded to hear a lecture from Gavazzi on 'The Papacy in England'. Distilling the essence of the long newspaper report, he

[28] Wolffe, *Protestant Crusade in Great Britain*, pp. 150, 151, 157, 158
[29] Kiernan, Story of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, p. 40
[30] Paz, *Popular Anti-Catholicism in Mid-Victorian England*, pp. 118-123
[31] *Coventry Herald* 20th April 1849

referred to Papal encroachment and said that 'Rome [was] as cunning… as Protestants were simple hearted…Wherever Popery was dominant, the people were under the dominion of despots and they themselves were slaves'. He saw a papal war against Protestantism as evidenced, in his view, by the unnecessary restoration of the Catholic bishoprics. When he was told Catholics in England were very quiet he pointed out that Catholic people 'were nothing - the Clergy were all'. Catholics were puppets and were not allowed to reason. He questioned whether women became or remained nuns through their own free will. Nuns might teach children to play the piano, draw, speak French and Italian but this was not a true British education which was to read the British Bible and serve God in the British tongue. He railed against families who employed Catholic nurses for their children, because impressionable children would from an early age be influenced by contact with such nurses who knelt and prayed before images and shrines. He saw Roman Catholics deriving their strength not from numbers but from unity. The *Coventry Herald* was not impressed by his lecture which it called a 'dramatic tirade', delivered in a style 'though common in Italy is (happily) unknown to sober English people'. It concluded the report thus: 'The "Father" was loudly applauded at the conclusion of his oration. Our own impression was decidedly unfavourable, both to the man, to what he said and to the manner in which he said it. Father Gavazzi has a low forehead, a flat head, and an animal and sensual face. Of the matter, - the whole tone was opposed to real Protestantism, and merely recommended the pulling down of one intolerance to set up another…The errors of Popery lie deeper than candles, and altars, and surplices, and the style of singing … Of the style of oratory, had it been on the stage we should have said it was over-acting and ranting'. This cool assessment is in contrast to that of the *Leicester Journal* who saw the town 'favoured by the visit from the great anti-Romish orator Gavazzi' in order to give two lectures. It saw him as 'widely celebrated and eloquent… [orating]… to a numerous and delighted audience… His action, when excited is the most powerful and expressive; and his tones perfectly thrilling. A vein of exquisite humour runs through his eloquences…' It recognised him as a 'remarkable man' and referred to a description of him which recognised 'his worthiness, his goodness, and his great ability. From such a man not only countries but the world may receive instruction and profit'.[32] He gave a second lecture in Leicester and also in Leamington entitled 'The Inquisition, Ancient and Modern' that graphically outlined the tortures of the Inquisition, which he said was nearer to the audience than they thought. In Ireland he said, Ribbonism was a branch of it. He warned his listeners that to have a Roman Catholic servant was 'to have the Inquisition in their family, to spy upon them'. Catholic priests should call themselves 'Assassins, murderers, consecrated cannibals'. He did not give this sensational second lecture in Coventry or in Stratford upon Avon.[33] The *Coventry Standard* 5th May 1854 which might have been expected to report with some enthusiasm on the content of the St. Mary's Hall talk could only muster itself to say: Father Gavazzi - This gentleman, who has been a Popish Priest, lectured at St. Mary's Hall. On Friday evening last, to a numerous audience, on the subject of the "Papacy".

The *Coventry Times* Wednesday 19th July 1876 reported that Gavazzi was back in Coventry to give a lecture on 'The Free Church of Italy' in Delf's West Orchard Chapel. His visit was part of a tour of Britain to collect funds for the Italian Free Church. He gave an anodyne talk about relying on the Bible alone, and concluded it by strongly denouncing the ritualism which he saw as becoming so prevalent in the Established Church and was Popery in disguise. It evoked no wide reaction, probably helped by the fact that it was not given in St. Mary's Hall.

---

[32] *Leicester Journal* 14th April 1854; *Leicester Chronicle* 22nd April 1854

[33] *Leamington Spa Courier* 22nd April 1854, 29th April 1854, 6th May 1854

Coventry City Mission

It was reported 19th December 1856 that sermons were preached in all Protestant churches - St. Michael's, St. John's, St. Peter's and St. Thomas's in aid of the Coventry Mission which was undertaken under the aegis of the Society for Promoting the Religious Principles of the Reformation.[34] The following day, a poorly attended meeting of friends of the society was held in St. Mary's Hall. The chairman J.B. Collinson, Vicar of St. Michael's stated there was prejudice and indifference towards the society's intentions. They believed Roman Catholics had purchased ground on which to establish a building 'with a view to wholesale proselytism'. This was a reference to the site in Raglan Street selected for a new convent and school. He stated that Roman Catholics seemed to believe it was their duty to convert everyone they could, and unless this belief was challenged the more religiously ignorant of the city would be won over. Rev. Dr. Taylor felt that it was not sufficient to preserve people from the efforts of the Church of Rome to 'pervert' them, but that they should convince Roman Catholics of the correctness of the Reformed Church principle which was based on individual interpretation of the bible. It was necessary to check the considerable advances being made by Roman Catholicism. Another speaker Rev. W. Clementson said the Society should have similar aims to those of the Irish Church Missions and establish an agency that would have the ambitions of Roman Catholics, shown by their acquisition of large numbers of adherents in cities from London to Preston, recent opening of a large number of chapels, appointment of additional priests, and foundation of convents. All of the above he said should be opposed. The chairman closed the meeting by remarking on the necessity of the mission, as approximately 100 people in Coventry had been 'perverted from the truth' by what in other circumstances would be commendable zeal of the Catholic Church - a zeal which they should emulate. The *Standard* stated it thus 'at least 100 persons have been, in Coventry, enticed over to Rome by the priests'. That evening the Rev. Hugh Stowell of Manchester preached on behalf of the Society in St. Michael's and reviewed the usual errors and heresies which he said were made by the Roman Church such as its claim to infallibility and to interpret the bible on behalf of its flock. He stressed that while he attacked the errors of the Church of Rome there was no attack by him on individual priests or Catholics.

Mentioned above was Rev. W. Clementson. He had visited Coventry in January 1854 to address a meeting in St. Mary's Hall convened for friends and supporters of the Protestant reformation society with a view to promoting 'Special missions to Roman Catholics in Great Britain'. His long address drew attention to Dr. Wiseman's assertion that Protestants had no right to interpret, the Bible. Clementson was said to have forcibly illustrated the spiritual and mental tyranny exercised by the Church of Rome over its members.[35]

Preachers did not have to visit Coventry for their message to be received. Editions of the *Coventry Standard* 10th, 17th and 25th February 1865 each published at length, under a heading 'Romanism', part of a lecture given by Dr Cumming of London in Northampton. He acknowledged the work of Canon Hugh Stowell and Dr Hugh McNeill of the Protestant Association. The relatively moderate opening tone of his lecture and his gracious initial surface admiration for the qualities of the Pope and clergy distracted attention from the strength of his attack that developed on the usual targets. He took aim at the craftiness of the clergy's methods, the harsh conditions borne by nuns and the growth of convents where 1,200 of the Queen's subjects were locked away, the question of the Pope's supremacy over temporal rulers as indicated by the attitudes of himself and his bishops, the continued persecution by the Church, Marian devotion, and denial of liberty by the Pope who regarded Protestants as heretics. The

[34] *Coventry Herald* 19th December 1856; *Coventry Standard* 19th December 1856
[35] *Coventry Standard* 27th January 1854

briefest flavour follows: ‘With admirable tact, therefore, the Church of Rome adapted her instrumentality to suit the characters of the people amongst whom she worked. Thus the priests appointed to work in Scotland were hard-headed, far-seeing men of great logical power of mind. In Ireland, on the other hand, where the people were impulsive, passionate and enthusiastic, the priests were open, ignorant and uneducated men, but they were also men full of passion and enthusiasm. The same plan of adaptation was pursued in England, where the priests were generally cultivated and educated men; they were in fact the gentlemen of the priesthood.’

The *Coventry Herald* 20th November 1857 reported how Mr. Hogan of the Coventry City Mission, ‘which is in connexion with the Protestant Reformation Society’ gave his observations on the standing of Catholicism in the city and his encounter with it, to a public meeting held by the Mission in St. Mary’s Hall. It is possible that, later in his remarks, he may not have been specifically referring to Coventy e.g. there were no resident Sisters of Charity in Coventry. Allowance must be made in reading his remarks for the expectations of the strongly Protestant audience he was addressing. Possibly, also, for a consciousness by him that the continuation of his own employment depended on his promotion of the belief that the attractions, and proselytising methods of Catholic Church were so forceful that they needed his missionary pushback.

> ‘He then proceeded to point out the footing that Roman Catholics had obtained in Coventry, and observed that it was one of their most successful mission stations. In the Roman Catholic Schools many Protestant children were being taught religion, and great efforts were made to convert them. He then related one or two instances where he had induced the Protestant parents of children attending the Roman Catholic School, to remove those children to Protestant Schools, and said that he had been the means of thus transplanting about twenty children. He considered that house-to-house visitation conducted by Priest and Sisters of Charity had been the means of making many converts or perverts to the Roman Catholic religion; and he also thought that the impressive service of the Church, its beautiful music, its argumentative and eloquent sermon, and the pomp and glory of the benediction, were calculated to charm and attract the minds of many Protestants, perhaps not well grounded in their faith. He further mentioned that most Roman Catholics were excellent controversialists, inasmuch as they were instructed on doctrinal points from their earliest youth, and great pains were taken to make them intimately acquainted with the controversy. The influence possessed by masters and mistresses was often used to induce their servants to adopt the Roman catholic faith; and domestic influence - the influence of the husband on the wife, or that of the wife on the husband, was also used for the same end, and this influence was often very successful. He concluded with an observation that his work in Coventry had been defensive rather than aggressive, for a most formidable organization existed here which required every effort to be made in order to counteract its subtle influence.’

Among the attendance was Rev. J Drury, London Clerical Secretary of the Protestant Reformation Society who denounced the Catholic Church; a snippet from his address should suffice to indicate his tone.

> ‘[Drury] spoke at some length of the arts used to captivate the senses of the attendants at the Roman Cathoic places of worship, Rome was wily, Rome was insidious; she always adapted to circumstances: and, although she could no longer plunge men into dungeons, -although she could no longer stretch them on the rack -although she could no longer use against those who refused to receive her errors the manifold tortures of the Inquisition, there was still the domestic persecution of which Mr Hogan had spoken.’

A Roman Catholic on the floor who had some difficulty getting a hearing contested statements made by Drury. The *Coventry Standard* 20th November 1857 concluded its brief account of the meeting with the terse sentence 'The proceedings terminated in a brawl raised by some Catholics.'

An interesting point was that Rev. W.H. Etches on taking the chair said he did so in the absence of the Vicar of St. Michaels, who was seriously ill, in the absence of the Incumbent of St, Thomas's who was also ill, and in the absence of the Vicar of Trinity, who was in London. Might they all have been conveniently indisposed to avoid being too closely associated in Coventry with Drury's outlook?

Appendix 6

Catholic Activity

Early References

Some linkage between Catholicism and the Irish can be found from the mid-eighteen century. A list exists of 33 persons from Coventry who were baptised between 1746 and 1762. Many names appear more than once: - Blackwell 4, Short 3, Stocks/Stooks 4, Roe 2, Landers 2, Brandon 2, FitzPatrick 2, Rian 2, Clark 2, and Weetman 2. Bruckfield and Whittingham are also mentioned; Mrs Bruckfield permitted her house in Little Park Street to be used as a chapel in 1775 while the Whittinghams were main benefactors to Coventry mission. The same surnames frequently re-appear among the sponsors on the list. Some names usually identified as Irish names are found: Margaret FitzPatrick was sponsored by Elanora O'Connor; Joseph Roe's sponsors were John Murphy and Elanora O'Connor; while Daniel Rian was sponsored by Joseph Murphy. Michael Rian who was baptised in 1753 was most likely his brother and in the same year a Bridget Ireland was baptised (with perhaps the forename Bridget more so than the second name suggesting an Irish background).[1]

On Sunday 19th May 1771 Laurance son of Gregory and Esther White of Dublin in Ireland was baptised by George Baynham with Francis McGuire and Ann Hickie as sponsors. Some names such as Davenport, Pinches, Lamb and Doyl reoccur into the nineteenth century indicating the presence of some long standing local Catholic families. There were reputed to be 107 Catholics in Coventry by 1770. The town was served until the end of the century by a number of Franciscan priests.

Throughout this period there is little reference to the existence of Catholic patrons. These patrons - old recusant aristocratic families - supported the church in parts of the country through the eighteenth century. The assistance of John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury in Staffordshire was particularly notable in the nineteenth century. The Petre family occupied Whitley Abbey, 1½ miles south of Coventry from 1867. See Appendix 2. They had their own oratory, where a priest from St. Osburg's said Mass, whenever the family resided in the mansion.[2] They added local social standing to Catholicism. Sir Edward Petre, 50 years of age in 1881, was a magistrate, deputy-lieutenant, Unionist and Catholic representative on the School Board. His wife Lady Gwendeline is referred to in relation to the church of St. Mary and St. Benedict, and also to Coventry Hospital. His daughter Lady Mary Petre was married by the Bishop of Portsmouth to Sir Henry Tichborne on September 8th, 1887 in St. Osburg's which was filled on the occasion by many titled attendees.[3] The Earls of Craven owned Coombe Abbey six miles to the east of Coventry. They had recusant history but do appear to have been involved in Coventry Catholicism. In the early nineteenth century there does not appear to have been the support for Catholicism in Coventry from a nucleus of business owners, as was the case in Birmingham.[4]

In 1803 the Benedictines came to Coventry, and until 1806-7 the congregation met in a house in Little Park Street. Then the small brick chapel of St. Mary and St. Laurence was opened in Hill Street by Revd John Dawber. Adjacent to it a school was built in 1826 which Fr Cockshoot extended in 1838.[5] It was said of the school in 1832 that 300 Catholics and Protestants were educated together with the latter parents' wishes

---

[1] Archdiocese of Birmingham Archives P140/1/2; Callum G. Brown, *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1770*, (London 1987) p. 45

[2] 'The City of Coventry: Roman Catholicism', pp. 368-371

[3] Simpson, Centenary Memorial of St. Osburg's, p. 35

[4] Bossy, *English Catholic Community*, p. 310

[5] 'The City of Coventry: Roman Catholicism', pp. 368-371

on suitable instruction acceded to. However the poverty of the congregation meant that not enough was being collected for its support.[6] Michael Maher (Appendix 2) a Dublin-born reporter with the *Coventry Herald* found the Catholics so poor that he taught them in his spare time in a local school. The only reference to open disdain having been shown to local Catholics, was contained in Dom Sebastian Simpson O.S.B, writings in 1945 about conditions in the late 1820s:

> 'Some of the oldest present-day members of the congregation repeat what has been handed down from their grandparents, that Catholics were hooted and laughed at and even stoned as they came to mass in Hill Street, which was then open country'.[7]

In 1832 the congregation in Coventry was referred to as 'exceedingly poor, and suffering especially in the present times'.[8] In August 1838 a memorial from Fr Cockshoot presented by Councillor Rotherham to a meeting of the Town Council provides an indication of the numbers attending Hill Street. In the petition the priest sought a gas lamp in Hill Street to assist those attending the chapel in winter darkness, and his request was on the basis that he paid a street rate of £3 per year for which he received only a frequently quenching oil-lamp. There was a congregation of six or seven hundred attending the chapel who suffered inconvenience and danger. Rotherham moved that a gas lamp be installed as he thought it was a hardship to ask Fr Cockshoot for £3 without offering him some equivalence. However the motion was lost.[9] According to the *Catholic Magazine*, Fr Cockshoot tried without success in the same year to have two orphans brought up as Catholics following the wish of their father who had died in nearby Foleshill workhouse. The 'men in office' including the parson, took the children to church and taught them the catechism of the 'established sect'. Intolerance could be close-by in the years following Emancipation; the report in the *Catholic Magazine* flattered British belief in their own tolerance by stating the writer's trust in 'the sense of justice now so strong in the English people' to 'correct the depravity' of the officials.[10] This neatly expressed the contradictory forces in society that faced Catholics; both a recently established legal tolerance and long held antagonism.

Catholic Baptismal Registers

The period 1825 to 1835 is a decade when information on the nature of the Irish weaving families settling in Coventry prior to the census of 1841 would be valuable. The variable handwriting, uneven presentation and minimal or faded details on many pages would make any attempt to systematically analyse the registers before 1840 a mammoth task. Table 4.4 gives a general impression of the level of all baptisms, which climbed in the 1830s but fell back in the late 1830s. Some entries of the baptism of Irish children are obvious, but in general, they are so mixed with other records that accurate quantification seems futile.

Also the writer is reluctant to assume there is a comprehensive index of Irish surnames that can be referred to when searching baptismal or poor law registers that will provide an accurate total of those of fairly immediate Irish origination. Persons with common Irish names like Murphy, Kelly, Reilly, or O'Connell, have a deserved case for being considered Irish. However the following is a selection of Irish-born from the Coventry census of 1841 whose names do not naturally suggest Ireland as a birthplace location:

---

[6] *Catholic Magazine* , 1832, pp. 743, 744
[7] Simpson, Centenary Memorial of Saint Osburg's, p. 18
[8] *Catholic Magazine* , 1832, pp. 743, 744
[9] *Coventry Herald* 17th August 1838
[10] *Catholic Magazine*, 1832, p. 331

Beaver, Bird, Brazell, Brownlow, Fawcett, Fleetwood, Fox, Greenway, Harris, Hayward, Jones, Lapworth, Montgomery, Newbold, Oliphant, Phillips, Pickard, Sidwell, Smith, Stewart, Temple, Thorpe, Tucker, Whittendale and Wilkinson.

From 1827 Fr Austin Marsh, until he left in 1830, included each mother's former name in the register. However Fr Anselm Cockshoot only continued this practice until the end of 1832. An entry for 21st October stated Fr Cockshoot baptised 'Richard Furlong, son of Andrew Furlong and Alice his wife (formerly Saunders) born 14th October 1832. Sponsors Francis McMahon and Catherine (Jeffs) Saunders'. It will be recalled in the introductory chapter that the Furlong family was the earliest mentioned. The asperous fortunes of this family are recorded in Appendix 1.

The Baptismal Register pages tell of tragic times. On 22nd October 1832 two persons were baptised with the words cholera and dead beside their names while a third fortunate person who was baptised on 28th October was noted as 'Cholera, recovered'.

The Murphy Riots

Coventry was spared the attention of Limerick-born William Murphy, who according to Sutherland, was an abusive and confrontational preacher, who 'combined anti-Catholicism with anti-Fenianism and anti-Irish racist slurs' during his Birmingham visit.[11] In 1867 sponsored by the Protestant Electoral Union, he visited Bristol, Cardiff, Bath, Plymouth, Wolverhampton, Birmingham and Walsall, before moving to the North and later to London.[12] Murphy seems not to have travelled east of Birmingham. A notice in the *Herald* 3rd May 1867 stated that he visited Wednesbury where there were between 600 to 700 in the body of the chapel and 300 in a temporary gallery. This collapsed and injured many of those who fell down, and those below fallen on; some not originally injured in the fall were hurt in the rush to escape the panic. The *Standard* 12th October 1867 disclosed that Murphy had lectured in Stourbridge, as it recorded that 'a few weeks ago' the Catholic Rev. Alban Craddock of Kidderminster had been attacked in the town by a mob of Murphy's followers and was now dying from internal injuries there caused. Similes abound of the combustible atmosphere in 1867 in Britain, as it would relate to the Irish. O'Day refers to the 'explosive mood of the time' and saw the Fenians adding 'fuel to the flames of racial hatred'.[13] In Birmingham, religious and racial antagonism had reached such a temperature that Murphy's vitriolic preaching was likened to a match thrown into a keg of powder.[14] According to MacRaild 'the awakening fears of… working class Protestants angered by Irish terrorism' found in Murphy a 'unifying focus and figurehead' who 'strengthened their prejudices'.[15]

Coventrians were aware of the riots which were seen as an affair particular to Birmingham. The *Standard* 21st June 1867 recorded that at the ceremonial civic opening of the Coventry Industrial and Art Exhibition, Lord Leigh, Lord Lieutenant of the County said he regretted the absence of the Mayor of Birmingham at the opening. This was due the disturbance taking place in Birmingham which caused him deeper regret. He was consoled by the thought that 'those disturbances were caused by a set of men whom he must call enthusiastic maniacs, who thought to promote the Protestant religion

[11] Philomena Sutherland, Sectarianism and Evangelicalism in Birmingham and Liverpool, 1850-2010' in J Wolffe (ed.), *Protestant-Catholic Conflict from the Reformation to the 21st Century: The Dynamics of Religious Difference*, (Basingstoke 2013) p. 140

[12] Walter L. Arnstein, The Murphy Riots: A Victorian Dilemna, *Victorian Studies*, 19, Issue 1 (1975) pp. 51-71

[13] O'Day, Varieties of anti-Irish behaviour, p. 33

[14] Philomena Sutherland, Sectarianism and Evangelicalism, p. 139

[15] Donald M. MacRaild, William Murphy, the Orange Order and communal violence: the Irish in West Cumberland, 1871-84, in Panikos Panayi (ed.), *Racial violence in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (London 1996) p. 46

by the most outrageous proceedings. He was at heart as strong a Protestant as any that ever stepped in England, but he was sure that such scenes as had been enacted in Birmingham during the past week, only detracted from the Protestant cause. There could not be one man of sound reason or good intellect who could possibly follow or sympathise with such maniacs. He hoped they would meet with the punishment they deserved'. His remarks drew loud applause. Earl Granville found Lord Leigh's comments sensible and thought what was occurring in a neighbouring town was 'a casual and transient excitement'.

The Murphy Riots were fully reported in the *Standard* on 21st and 22nd June 1867 and *Herald* on 21st June 1867.[16] The *Standard* told of the riot in Park Street, to where the Irish labourers had returned after their day's work 'evidently ripe for any amount of mischief and blackguardism'. As might be expected the *Herald* adopted a more sympathetic tone. In its reference to Park Street which it said had suffered indescribable damage at the hands of the mob, it declared:

> 'The spectacle presented in that respect was truly shocking. It is said that the Irish were the great culprits on Sunday and Monday. Even if that was so, the retribution is fearful.'

In an editorial it asked, in regard to the serious disturbance:

> 'Who is most to blame, the man Murphy who goes about speaking evil of men who differ from him on religious grounds, or the ignorant mob that opposed him, we shall not pretend to decide… We have no sympathy with either Protestants or Catholics who cannot hold fast by their own creed, and at the same time tolerate the religious scruples of those who may differ from them. The Protestant church should, if it does not, refuse to sympathise with agitators of the Murphy stamp.'

There was nothing further mentioned in the papers on any implications, or lessons to be learnt for Coventry. Given his appearance in the neighbouring towns of Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Walsall, Murphy's absence from Coventry could suggest that he did not see in a relatively tolerant Coventry - where no Protestant Association had sown distaste for Catholicism - prime conditions to permit a whipping-up of anti-Catholic sentiment. Given his appearance in the small town of Stourbridge, the size of Coventry per se would not have deterred him if he was minded to take in the city. His reasons for avoiding Coventry may have been mundane, in that after visiting the Birmingham district he had enough for the moment of the Midlands and decided to travel north. He may have thought Coventry was unlikely to respond to demagoguery as it was widely accepted that the town was at a low ebb in the 1860s. In 1867 it was said 'The artizans of the town have suffered most severely from slackness of trade of extraordinary duration; they are still groaning under the burden of what has seemed almost chronic depression'.[17] The London Correspondent of the *New York Times* gave an account of his visit to the Midlands in 1867 which was recorded in the *Standard*. Leaving Oxford he travelled to Leamington where he described the pleasure town. Then he travelled north to describe the industrial hive of Birmingham. About all he could profer in relation to Coventry was that he attained 'a glimpse of three tall spires, standing close together, and a decaying old town, which is full of antiquarian interest, and not much besides'.[18]

---

[16] For an account of the riots see: Patsy Davis, Birmingham's Irish community and the Murphy Riots of 1867, in *Midland History*, Vol. 31, 1 2006

[17] *Coventry Herald* 28th June 1867

[18] *Coventry Standard* 19th October 1867

The Orange Order

While there was an ad hoc nature to Protestant excitement when the Catholic Church seemed to be assertive, Norman noted the permanent presence of the Orange Order.[19] In 1892 the Orange Order Provincial District comprised Leicester, Leamington, Birmingham, Northampton, Bristol, Plymouth, and Kidderminster; Coventry was not included in the list.[20] A necessarily fleeting enquiry here regarding the Order's activity in Birmingham indicates the reinforcement there of antipathy to Irish national aspiration and religious conviction, that was avoided in Coventry through the absence of a local Lodge.

In Birmingham in 1864 T.H. Aston was District Master of the newly established Lodge. In June 1867 during the riots, Aston who was described as a prominent member of the Protestant Association, suffered an attack on his shop in Dale End from a crowd who broke his windows and damaged his furniture.[21] The annual 12th July sermon, attended by members of the Orange Order in Birmingham in 1869, heard Brother Owen the preacher allude to the 'dissembling fawning habit of the Jesuits', their system was 'engrossed in error and heathen superstition' and that Orangemen condemned the wearing of the cross which was not the 'emblem of salvation, but the sin-stained love token of Romanism'. He ended by saying:

> 'Rome was doomed eventually to perish; for, drunk with the blood of the saints, and having caused the nations to drink the wine of her fornication, the wrath of God was upon her, and God would Himself destroy her'.[22]

Over twenty years later in 1893 the Birmingham District Lodge adopted a resolution 'recording its heartfelt thanks to the 419 members of the House of Lords in exercising their legitimate prerogative in defeating the pernicious and disloyal Home Rule Bill'.[23]

The Census of Religious Worship 30th March 1851

This was a one-off occurrence and only counted those who practiced religion in a centre of worship on that particular day. See Table 4.5. It indicated 900 Catholics attended morning service, 300 afternoon service and 1,000 evening service in St. Osburg's. Fr Ralph Pratt remarked that he could not say what the average attendance was per month. 'In the summer months the church is quite crowded and it was built to hold 1800 persons. In the winter we have not so many and much depends on weather.'[24] Conditions on the census day may not have been conducive to a maximum attendance in view of the remark by Vicar Collison of St. Michael's that 'the excessive cold and dampness during the winter months drives numbers away and this particular day was on other accounts unfavourable'.[25] The rounded figures of this once off census suggest that it was not an actual or indeed accurate count for St. Osburg's. Initially it appeared that the evening attendance was out of proportion to the morning service, however a similar occurrence can be noted for Wolverhampton. Ullathorne had remarked after the opening of St. Osburg's that the evening services were 'closely packed, every standing place being filled as well as the seats', though it is possible that this enthusiastic assemblage was a short term exhilarated response on the opening of new church, or was a devotional zeal engendered by Gentili's mission that also may have faded in the years after 1845.[26]

---

[19] Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England*, p. 20
[20] *Leicester Chronicle* 11th June 1892
[21] *Coventry Herald* 21st June 1867
[22] *Birmingham Daily Gazette* 12th July 1869
[23] *Birmingham Daily Post* 22nd September 1893
[24] National Archives HO 129/400 p. 3
[25] Ibid., p. 4
[26] Butler, *The Life and Times of Ullathorne*, Vol. 1, p. 128

Fr Ralph Pratt

The *Coventry Herald* 8th and 14th December 1860 recorded the attendance of Fr Pratt at meetings of the General Committee for the relief of distressed operatives.

The *Coventry Herald* 7th June 1861 described the funeral of Irish-born Joseph O'Keeffe a private in the 4th Dragoons then stationed in the Barracks. The impressive scene of the cavalcade of all the men in the barracks, the dead soldier's horse, with his sword and helmet on the saddle, the band playing and its muffled drums booming, was watched as it proceeded to the cemetery by an 'immense throng of spectators'. Fr Pratt rendered the funeral prayers at the graveside. The *Coventry Standard* of the same date said 'Rev Father Pratt conducted the funeral service in a very impressive manner'.

The *Coventry Standard* 18th January 1862 reported a meeting of the Relief Committee was held at St. Mary's Hall. Present at which was Lieutenant of the county Lord Leigh, T. Soden the Mayor, C.N. Newdegate MP, local councillors and clergy which included Fr Pratt.

The *Coventry Herald* 26th December 1862 gave a round-up of how Christmas was marked at gatherings in the city. It said Father Pratt preached a sermon during High Mass, to a very large congregation, in a profusely decorated St. Osburg's.

The *Coventry Times* 18th February 1863 reported Father Pratt attended a public meeting arranged by the city Council to consider how the marriage day of the Prince of Wales and Princess Alexandra of Denmark might be celebrated.

The *Coventry Standard* 6th October 1866 reported on the celebratory luncheon attended by a large number of dignitaries that was given following the opening of Leigh Mills. The first toast proposed by the Mayor was the health of 'The Queen'. The next was to the 'Clergy of the Diocese and the Ministers of Religion present'. Coupled with that toast, were the healths of the Rev Baynes, Vicar of St. Michael, and Father Pratt, which drew loud applause. The *Catholic Telegraph* 6th October 1866 picked up on this non-sectarian gesture, used in Coventry, when it remarked: 'In spite of the protests of the Anglican clergy against the modern practice of drinking at public dinners "the ministers of religion of all denominations," instead of "the bishop and clergy of the diocese," as of old, a Conservative member of Parliament, and a member of the Government to boot, Mr. Adderly, ventured to propose the new formula the other night at Coventry. The occasion was the opening of some new mills in that city, and Lord Leigh, the Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire, presided. Mr. Adderley coupled with the toast the names of the Rev. R.H. Baynes, the vicar of Coventry, and Father Pratt, the Roman Catholic priest. Mr. Baynes did not walk out of the room or protest, but made a suitable reply, and Father Pratt did the same.'

In the *Coventry Herald* 30th August 1867 Pratt, was recorded as one of the signatories with other town clerics and notables, of a requisition presented to the Mayor seeking a meeting with a view to the establishment of a Free Public Library.

The *Coventry Standard* 16th October 1868 stated that at the Coventry Philantrophic Institution annual dinner Father Pratt asked a blessing and later acknowledged a toast to 'The Clergy of all Denominations'.

The late 1860s was a time for Catholics to be careful; religious prejudice was still abroad, there were underlying antipathies that had been re-awakened nearby in Birmingham by Murphy's exacerbations and by Fenian clandestinity; a mis-step by Catholics could provide an excuse for it to take active form. The *Coventry Herald* 12th November 1869 told of a meeting of the Board of Directors for the Workhouse at which a letter from Father Pratt was read. Written on hearing the women's dining room was being altered to make it suitable for dissenting services - he stated he would be most happy to accept the offer for Catholics in the Workhouse, to be allowed assemble in one room. Some directors felt the letter should be ignored, others felt Father Pratt should be told that the directors had not considered any such arrangement. There was discussion

about whether the room, intended for all denominations, should include Catholics, and if so whether an altar could be fitted, and if it was, would it be a permanent fixture that needed consecration if mass was to be celebrated on it. Discussion on the matter was adjourned. At their next meeting the chairman said Father Pratt had called to explain to him that his letter had been misinterpreted during the discussion at the last Board meeting. Father Pratt had believed the ratepayers were unhappy about the cost of altering the dining room and he was prepared to pay his share. He said Mr Bird [Workhouse Master] had always facilitated him but on the basis he was seeing Catholic inmates individually. He said he made 'no claim on the Board, but he would like to have the opportunity of collecting his people together in the dissenting chapel… He also had no idea of erecting an altar in the House'. On hearing this the Board unanimously agreed to the Catholics sharing the dissenting chapel. Bird tried to give the matter another stir by asking if Catholic inmates would as formerly, now be allowed out to attend church but the chairman advised Bird to let the matter rest.[27] In the situation where there was a risk of self-important, or petty-minded local managements, seeking an excuse in the letter of the law to turn out a negative decision, the accommodating and ameliorating approach of Father Pratt was successful. It achieved more, than might be procured by an insistence on Catholic right to toleration, and so left goodwill in the air. In references to him there was no mention of him issuing thundering sermons or dogmatic articles. Well might E.H. Delf have averred to 'good old Father Pratt whose removal from Coventry I never could understand, because his great liberality helped rather than hindered the interests of Roman Catholicism'.[28]

The Catholic Young Men's Society

On Sunday 28th February 1858 a lecture on the Young Men's Society was delivered by Ralph Pratt. The Society commenced on 7th March 1858. Pratt its spiritual Director nominated the Council members: President Richard Hackett, Vice-President Patrick Kelly, Secretary Charles Heuet, John Rogers, James Smallwood, Mathew Jelly, Joseph Pinkard, James Kileen, James Pinches, Andrew Taylor, William McGowran, and Joseph Kileen. Over the following week 50 were admitted as members. The rules stated every member should confess at Christmas, Lent, Easter, Whitsunday, St Peter & Paul, The Assumption, St. Michael, and All Saints. The reading room would be open 7-9 weekdays and 2-5 on Sundays. At 8pm spiritual exercises lasting no loger than 10 minutes would commence and the weekly subscription would be one penny. The officers would be the President, Vice-President, Secretary, 9 Councillors and the Spiritual Director. By Easter Sunday the society had 68 members and they gave an entertainment which began at 7.00 and finished at 10.30pm. The platform comprised planks resting on benches with a harmonium to the side. Home made wines, coffee, cakes and oranges were available. The event was well organised with society members assigned to sell tickets at the gate, manage refreshments, act as door keepers and as seating guides. Tickets were limited to 250. By 10th July there were 80 members in two Guilds – St. Benedicts numbering 50 and St Gregorys numbering 30. On 21st August Patrick Kelly sent in his resignation. Another entertainment took place on October 13th followed by one in St. Mary's Hall on 27th December. On 1st February Fr Pratt delivered a lecture on St Peter's at Rome. The first annual meeting was held on 2nd March 1859. It was remarked that the 'books show 100 members but we do not expect all these to continue… some have attended but seldom'. A vote using beans resulted in Dr McVeagh becoming President with Richard Hackett now Vice-President. Michael Kimberley was elected to the Council but he resigned three weeks later. Hacket sent in his resignation on 16th April and could not be persuaded by a deputation to withdraw it,

[27] *Coventry Herald* 19th November 1869
[28] Ibid. 15th December 1876

so Mathew Jelly took his place as Vice-President. Ullathorne was invited to give a lecture but he declined due to pressure of commitments. A tea party held on 25th April just broke even as the day was very wet. They were not able to obtain a band so a suggestion on 9th July was that they instead picnic in Combe Abbey. On 10th October those who attended a meeting were Messr Jelly, Smallwood, Hancox, Swain, Watts (William) and Watts (Joseph), Brooks and Hewitt. A Mr Beever replaced a Mr Evans. On 13th October Dr McVeagh gave a lecture on 'Various races of men'.[29] Mr Jelly sent in his resignation on 21st January 1860. The foregoing was gleaned from the minutes of the Society which have survived for this period.[30]

Table A.6.1 Members of Catholic Young Men's Society March 1859

St. Benedicts Guild	St. Gregory Guild	St. Mary Guild	St. Osburg's Guild
James Pinches Warden	Joseph Watts Warden	Joseph Brooks	William Hinds
Dr McVeagh	Jillin James	Joseph Nichools	James Hall
Richard Hacket	John Evans	James Hall	Elijah Kimberley
James Smallwood	James Kelley Senr	Edward Atkins	John Heart
Chas Thos Hewit	Thomas Kelley	George Tew	
Joseph Killin	James Brannan	James Sanders	
Joseph Brooks	William Swain	John Moore	
James Pinches	Michael Kimberley	Edward Tew	
Mathew Jelly	William Brooks	John Clark	
Joseph Pickard	William Maxwell	William Ryan	
William Spenser	Martin Bohen	William Bevins	
Frances Hewson	James Elliot	Michael Bohen	
John Smith	Arthur Limerick	William Pinches	
Mathew Begley	George Beaumont	Dominic Burk	
John Conway	Joseph Doran	John Sullervan	
Joseph Watts Senr	Feargas Ball	Ambrose Carpenter	
Joseph Watts Junr	Thomas Hancox	Joseph Croft	
William Watts	Joseph Atkins	Philip Cox	
	William Taylor	Charles Cox	

Some details of the council members follow, with year shown in brackets where information was gleaned from the census. It is to be noticed that both the President and Vice-president were Irish-born:

[29] The *Coventry Herald* 15th October 1859 described the lecture as follows: 'The Science of Ethnology' embracing a history of the various races of men, with their classification and distribution; together with the arguments to prove the unity of our species, as advanced by many eminent naturalists,'

[30] St. Osburg's Catholic Young Men's Society, Record 1858 to 1866. Held by Coventry History Centre, PA 1821. Spelling of names as written in the document. From March 1860 the record consists of details of those who borrowed books fromthe Society. It had a collection of 300 books. Reading material such as - *The Weekly Register*, the *Catholic Telegraph*, *The Lamp* and the *Illustrated London Times* - could be found in the society room.

Richard Hackett: (1851) 36, Hand loom ribbon weaver, Irish-born, Naul Mills Lane.
Patrick Kelly: (1851) 46, Hand loom ribbon weaver, Irish-born, Bishop Street. OR
Patrick Kelly: (1851) 45, Hand loom weaver silk, Dublin-born, Spon Street.
James Kileen: (1851) Born in Congleton in 1829, Watch Finisher, His mother in 1851 was a widowed laundress from Roscommon. His brother is next on the list.
Joseph Killen: (1851) Born in Coventry in 1837, Power loom weaver.
James Smallwood: (1851) 35, Watch Finisher, Foleshill. Had a Dublin lodger.
Mathew Jelly: (1861) 31, Confectioner & Jeweller, Coventry-born, married to Irish-born Mary Jane, 16 Smithford Street.
James Pinches: (1861) 24, Watch Finisher, Spon Street.
Charles Hewitt: Five possible candidates all born in Coventry.
Joseph Pickard: Four possible candidates all born in Coventry.
Andrew Taylor: Born in Coventry in 1841.
John Rogers: See Appendix 2
William McGowran: See Appendix 2

The Young Men's Society arranged annual picnics to salubrious estates neighbouring the city. The *Coventry Standard* 9th August 1862 told Father Pratt was present, with between 200 and 250 visitors, during a visit to Whitmore Park, home of Edward Phillips MD. Tea was served in a large marquee and a brass brass band attended. They picniced again at the Phillips residence in August 1863 and August 1865. Football, cricket, quoits, la grasse [lacrosse] could be played, while dancing was popular.[31] In June 1869 members and friends of the society held a picnic at the invitation of Edward Petre in the grounds adjacent to Whitley Abbey. Around 500 visited during the day; tea was on offer to about 200 in a large marquee; the games recently listed could be played; while those who wished to dance could do so to the music of the Rifle Volunteer Band. Mr Petre allowed people to walk in the gardens and made a number of appearances. When he did so during tea in the marquee he was loudly cheered. Fathers Pratt and Moore were present; the former 'in his usual hearty and genial manner, exerted himself to make the party pass off satisfactorily'. At nine o'clock the band struck up God save the Queen bringing the party to an end.[32]

The society arranged tea parties in St. Mary's Hall. The *Coventry Herald* 31st December 1858 reported that Catholic Young Men's Society gave their third entertainment in that hall with Fr Pratt in attendance. Father Pratt was present at a tea party on 14th June 1862 attended by about 400 in St. Mary's Hall.[33]

On 29th December 1865 the society held their 'usual' Christmas party. Father Moore presided in the absence of Father Pratt, with dancing continuing until eleven o'clock.[34] A soiree and dancing party was attended by a very large party in April 1867.[35] These parties may not have been quite the mild, restrained occasions that might be imagined to have been organised by the Catholic Young Men's Society. On 10th January 1868 a letter was published which said the writer having heard 'a great deal of the parties got up by Father Pratt and the members of his church, of their excellent management', attended one on Boxing night only to find the hall so crowded that people could not dance. 'The noise and confusion, and improper language were very bad…policemen and visitors and managers were fighting together… Mr Pratt, the chairman, was not to be seen… I should think it would be better not to let them sell beer

[31] *Coventry Herald* 1st August 1863; *Coventry Standard* 12th August 1865
[32] *Coventry Standard* 11th June 1869
[33] *Coventry Herald* 14th June 1862
[34] Ibid. 29th December 1865
[35] *Coventry Times* 24th April 1867

and spirits, as it looks so much like a public-house.'[36] It was said of the soiree held on December 27th December 1870 that there was no disorder or confusion of any kind and that the committee were pleased with the excellent order during the whole of the evening.[37] The annual soiree was mentioned in 1873 with an attendance that was 'numerous and respectable'. To avoid overcrowding, the committee responsibly turned away those without tickets. The tea party was presided over by Father Moore with Father Pereira also present. Brother J.P. Beevers directed the band.[38]

The society arranged talks, penny readings and entertainments in the schoolroom. On 14th June 1862 Rev. James Connelly gave a well attended lecture on 'Traits of Irish Character' to the Catholic Young Men's Society. Dr McVeagh proposed a vote of thanks.[39] The *Catholic Telegraph* 22nd November 1862 reported that a lecture was given in the school room to members and friends of the Catholic Young Men's Society. About 300 attended in the presence of Father Pratt, Father Moore and Denis McVeagh as president, to hear Rev. L. Groom of Warwick deliver a lecture on 'The influence of Christianity on the Civilization of Europe'. The *Coventry Times* 2nd December 1863 informed that the first penny reading took place in the Catholic school in Hill Street. Again Fathers Pratt and Moore were present with about 300 in the audience. J.P. Beever (Coventry-born Watchfinisher: Irish-born mother) proposed a vote of thanks and God Save the Queen was rendered at the end of the proceedings. Later in the month there was a second reading, over which Father Pratt presided with D McVeagh still president. It was recorded that 'many of our Protestant and Dissenting friends favoured us by attending, and we hope they will continue to give us their support, as we do not intend making the movement sectarian'.[40] On the 28th March 1864 there was an entertainment at which Rev. Pratt presided. It consisted of a performance before a very fair attendance of appreciative visitors of the farce 'The Tailor of Tamworth', a concert by members of St. Osburg's choir, an address by Fr. Pratt and finally the farce 'The Queer Subject'.[41] About 350 people attended a penny reading in the school room on 29th April 1864 to raise money for a childen's treat. Rev. Pratt was chairman and, including a donation from D. McVeagh, more than £2 was raised for boys. A similar evening to raise funds for girls was to be held a week later.[42] In May a penny reading raised £3. 5s. for a treat for the girls in St. Mary's School, Raglan Street.[43] Nearly 200 persons attended a penny reading in October while in December 1864 a reading and musical entertainment was given to a room 'crowded to excess' that raised upwards of £3 for the poor.[44]

In December 1865 there was an evening of entertainment followed by another on 31th January 1866 when Fr Pratt gave a talk on the history of Coventry.[45] A penny entertainment followed on 6th February while on the 20th February Fr Pratt gave a second lecture on the history of the city.[46] On 27th of the same month, a band of minstrels entertained to hearty applause.[47] The *Coventry Standard* 9th March 1867 wrote of the last of the 1866-7 series of penny entertainments held in school whose visitors were 'numerous and respectable'. James Pinches the president of the Catholic Young Men's Society said it would be followed by an evening of special entertainment on 19th

---

[36] *Coventry Herald* 10th January 1868
[37] Ibid. 7th January 1870
[38] Ibid. 3rd January 1873
[39] Ibid. 14th June 1862
[40] *Coventry Herald* 18th December 1863
[41] *Catholic Telegraph* 2nd April 1864
[42] *Coventry Herald* 29th April 1864
[43] *Coventry Standard* 13th May 1864
[44] *Coventry Herald* 21st October 1864, 9th December 1864
[45] Ibid. 8th December 1865; *Coventry Standard* 3rd February 1866
[46] *Coventry Herald* 9th February 1866, 23rd February 1866
[47] Ibid. 2nd March 1866

March. On that evening popular entertainment was again provided to a 'numerous and very respectable audience'. In attendance was Frs Moore and Pratt, the latter gave an interesting talk on the history of Coventry. Given that it was close to St. Patrick's Day there was no obvious Irish content in the programme for the evening.[48]

A large attendance was also noted on 2nd April 1869 for an evening of entertainment with Father Pratt in the chair 'whose geniality did much to promote the success of the gathering'.[49] In November under the auspices of the CYMS, H.E. Moore delivered an entertaining lecture entitled 'A Sketch of the Life of the Rev. Arthur O'Leary'.[50]

An evening of entertainment took place on 18th February 1870 in a room well-filled by a 'highly respectable audience' with proceeds to help the poor through the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Father Pratt was ill, so Father Moore was in attendance with Dr. McVeagh and James Hegan.[51] This was a rare mention of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and indicates the existence of Catholic organised assistance to the poor.[52] These Catholic Young Men had the potential to provide local leadership of the Irish but it was absorbed in a Society driven by Catholic social objectives.

In April 1877 there was a large attendance in St. Osburg's school where entertainment was provided at a tea-party that raised £22. 14s. On Easter Tuesday 300 children (about 40 more were absent) enjoyed their usual treat.[53] In February 1882 there was an entertainment and recitals in the school, a concert in October, while in November of the same year an entertainment that was a 'capital programme consisting of duets, songs, dialogue, and two comic farces, was gone through before a large and very discriminative audience'.[54]

The *Coventry Herald* 19th March 1886 reported that on St. Patrick's Day the Irish drama 'The Shaughraun' was performed before a packed attendance in St. Osburg's schools. Selections of Irish music were played during intervals. The cast included some familiar surnames: J. Regan, J. Duffy, J. Conroy, Miss M. Hennessey and Miss W. Moran - the first two being associated with the local branch of the Land League. In 1893 the St. Patrick's Day concert was held in St. Osburg's schools. A brief snatch from the report gives a flavour of the type of repetoire at all these concerts: Rev J.B. Murphy OSB sang 'Kathleen Mavourneen' and 'The Shamrock'; Mr H. Pinches sang 'Thaddy O'Flynn'; Mr W. Morton sang 'The Kerry Dance' and 'Mary O'More'; Miss A. Morton sang 'The low-backed car'; Miss McVeagh sang 'Clara Nolan's Ball' and 'The three old maids of Lee'; while Dr McVeagh entertained with 'Widow McCree' and 'Come back to Erin'.[55]

The *Coventry Herald* 28th December 1894 reported that the Young Men's Society held its annual soiree at St. Mary's Hall. The same paper, 23rd March 1888, and 24th March 1899 recorded that similar St. Patrick's Day concerts were held at the Corn Exchange for those years.

Notes on the Education Question

In 1857 Ullathorne, while Bishop of Birmingham, wrote about both the implications of accepting state support for Catholic schools and the nature of Catholic

[48] Ibid. 22nd March 1867
[49] Ibid. 2nd April 1869
[50] Ibid. 12th November 1869
[51] *Coventry Standard* 18th February 1870; (Hegan was a Liverpool-born watchmaker in 1861. Licensee of the Unicorn Inn, Burges, 1866-74. Licensee of the Golden Lion, Bull Ring,1879-94.)
[52] The local conference had been in existence since the the mid-1850s. (Simpson, Centenary Memorial of Saint Osburg's, p. 18)
[53] *Coventry Standard* 16th April 1877
[54] *Coventry Herald* 24th February, 20th October, and 24th November 1882
[55] Ibid. 24th March 1893

education. This writing in *Notes on the Education Question* included comments on the Irish which may have been informed to some extent by his stay in Coventry. However the Coventry Irish were not specifically referred to and his remarks were undoubtedly expanded by his experience of the relatively vast, approximately 10,000 Irish-born then resident in Birmingham. He reckoned that there were 800,000 Irish in England 'by origin or descent' and this was a figure that only covered the -

> 'class of the labouring and the poor' who were Catholics… They are not only the very poorest of the people, but they are the least befriended….whilst their labour is readily accepted, if they apply for aid in their distress, they are but too often regarded with the secret feeling of being aliens and intruders. "Aliens," as Lord Lyndhurst expressed so pithily the popular feeling, "in blood, language, and religion".[56]

He continued:

> 'The Irish are undoubtedly the quickest children in our schools, especially on religious subjects; yet it is impossible to deny that, in this country, the Irish poor have not, as a body, the same zeal for the education of their children that they have for their religion. This too is most certain, that they will not accept of education except from the Catholic Church,'[57]

He further remarked that:

> 'terribly in want of a home are our poor, dear, Catholic Irish. They swarm through the population seeking work. Strangers and wanderers, they take lodgings in the foulest quarters of a town, because they are the cheapest and the only quarters that will receive them. The damp and mouldy chamber, which is the abode and sleeping place of the family, has perhaps not even an occasional lime-wash to refresh its walls. And he who has two or three broken-down chairs and a pallet for the family to lie on, has a comparatively well furnished lodging. Of what interest is it to him? He must leave it next week…In Birmingham, it is estimated that one in three, in Wolverhampton, that one in four of the Catholic poor change their place of living within a few months'.[58]

He recognised 'the continual change of residence amongst our poor, forms another obstacle to our work, since it prevents the good that might be done by following the children to their homes, and looking them up when absent'.[59] This difficulty of keeping in contact with the shifting Irish must have hindered the ability of Coventry priests to render ongoing social support to poor Irish. How in touch was the Midland clergy with the circumstances of the Irish poor is answered by his document. It is clear from it that Dr Ullathorne had not become lofty and remote after becoming a bishop, but had a detailed, down-to-earth, understanding of the miserable condition of the Irish poor, its causes and his remedies. Ullathorne admired the virtuous poor and he blamed those who drank or did not try to make a good home for children, as responsible for their deprived state. However he blamed industrialisation for destroying his ideal of an innocent domestic system, whereby the mother would remain at home in order that the children might be properly reared and attend school. The pervasiveness of urban poverty emerged from his writing, as does the impression, that poor people in their way of life, had much in common with the Irish poor. His articulation of the 'secret feeling' provides evidence of its existence, which because of its surreptitiousness has not been well documented. He was not reluctant to repeat Lord Lyndhurst's invective, made over twenty years earlier; an invective usually raised by friends of Ireland whenever a reminder was needed of the depth of Tory insensitivity. In his use of the word 'swarm'

---

[56] Ullathorne, *Notes on the Education Question*, p. 9
[57] Ibid., p. 10
[58] Ibid., pp. 52, 53
[59] Ibid., p. 57

it is clear that those who had arrived in the ten years after Black '47 still remained a voluminous, unsettled body. His reference above to the 'Catholic poor' in a paragraph dealing with the Irish indicates how interchangeable 'Irish' and 'Catholic' could be. His distinction of the migrants collectively bound in the word 'Irish' and the descriptions of poverty he supplied may have aided the confirmation of the stereotype of Irish existence where the Irish suffered poverty en masse. His straightforward classification of persons as English or Irish shows that at the time of his writing, the Irish were identifiable as a separate group. This analytical luxury for researchers confined to his time period is less available at the end of century, where researchers would be faced with a new composition of an Irish community, one where intermarriage and local-birthing had increased. The document provides rare direct reference by him to the social circumstances of the Irish and in describing the general conditions of the people that surrounded them indicates the Irish while especial, shared a pervasive culture of poverty. His approach, while making reference to specific towns, adopts what appears to have been a common strategy for dogmatic writers. This was to target description or criticism at an upper echelon or collective level but to avoid negatively commenting on a locality or its minor functionaries though they were an element of the whole. However the account produced, although largely anonymised and universalised could nonetheless be taken by the reader in a particular location as characterising the traits or failings of the local or the individual therein.

While Ullathorne blamed a range of factors for the plight of the poor he wrote that some poor had negligent habits.

> 'We see every day women sitting over their fire doing nothing, the children in rags, the house in a state of disorder, which of itself has a most degrading and debasing effect on the minds of those who live in the midst of it… this has nothing to do with poverty, and might all be remedied, had the mother been brought up to habits of neatness and industry.'[60]

He pointed to their children losing an education and childhood through an early-age withdrawal from school in order that they could bring home income. He told of women going out to work for income instead of making a home.[61] He wrote 'Poverty was not really the cause of the neglected state of the children, but the want of a regulated home; even the drunkenness which is the devouring demon of the poor comes mainly from this cause'.[62] He noticed the early independence of young girls from parental control was conspicuous among the lace-makers of Nottingham and the ribbon weavers of Coventry: 'But their fondness for finery, which is inspired by their occupations, though they cannot even mend their own clothes, is to them the greatest occasion of their being led into vice'.[63]

<u>Denominational attendance at worship in Coventry 30th March 1851.</u>

To gauge the strength of Catholic attendance in Coventry the returns of morning attendance from other congregations may be noted (total attendance for day given in brackets).[64] There were six Church of England places of worship in Coventry,

---

[60] Ibid., p. 54

[61] Ibid., pp. 50, 53, 56

[62] Ibid., p. 59

[63] Ibid., p. 55

[64] In comparing morning attendance throughout the city there is an assumption that the most important ceremony of the day occurred in the morning. However for some denominations the main act of worship may have taken place in the afternoon or evening. These congregational attendance figures included Sunday scholars who would have added to the vibrancy around these houses of prayer; none such were recorded at St. Osburg's. Further these figures represent attendance and not membership figures. They refer to attendance at each ceremony and do not distinguish the number of worshippers who might have attended a second service, e.g. Mass in the morning and Rosary in the evening.

(excluding St. John's Church - whose details are now missing) with a total of 2,871 (6,585) that attended divine service in them. A variety of dissenting congregations' attendance figures were provided under the following titles: Independents 1,350 (2,845), Particular Baptists 537 (654), General Baptists 397 (567), Unitarians 325 (435), Methodists 203 (445), Primitive Methodists 193 (335) and Society of Friends 31 (36). Styled as 'Other Christian', attendances were provided for the Latter Day Saints 20 (141) and Roman Catholics 900 (2,200).[65] Catholics comprised 13.2% of all morning religious attendance, 42.1% of all morning Church of England attendance and constituted the largest morning gathering of any individual city congregation. For day-long attendances Catholics represented 15.1% of all religious attendance and 31.4% of day-long Church of England attendance. Catholic attendance was surpassed only in size by the combined centres of Church of England attendance, or similarly by Independents whose figure it should be noted of 2,845 attendees was inflated by 474 Sunday Scholars. It shows by 1851 the Catholic Church as numerically strong in a traditionally but denominationally diverse Protestant city that reflected the 'baffling fertility of the religious imagination of Englishmen'.[66]

For Coventry the attendances figure for all religions amounted to 40.1% of the population in the Borough. Of that attendances figure 45.1% was contributed by Church of England, 39.3% by Non-conformists, 15.1% by Roman Catholics and .4% by Latter day Saints. This figure of 15.1% (17.3% if Sunday Scholars are excluded) for Coventry Roman Catholics may be contrasted with the Roman Catholic share at 2.88% of national church attendances, 6.1% of all attendances in Birmingham, 3.5% of all in Leicester, 6.9% of all in Wolverhampton.

The unease over what appears as a high evening attendance at 1,000 for St. Osburg's coupled with the rounded figure - suggesting an estimate that could have inflated the Coventry result that may be assessed by examining the morning attendances only. This shows Roman Catholic share of national church attendance at 5.4%, Birmingham at 7.8%, Wolverhampton (Parliamentary Borough) at 6.1% and Leicester at 3.8% while Coventry remained at a relatively high 13.2%.[67]

Catholic Marriage Registers at Mid-Century

There was a large number of Irish in the total of Catholic marriage ceremonies at mid-century (Table 4.1). Details extracted from the census on 23 marriages show: 6 did not involve Irish, 6 had possible Irish association, and 11 had Irish participation. Six of these were marriages of Irish-born to each other, but suggesting an integrative tendency (within Catholic parameters), 5 consisted of partnerships where one party was not Irish-born.[68]

Marriage registers provide maiden names of women and thus expose the linkage between families that is hidden in the census enumeration pages. Parents and witness names are made available that elucidate on family background. Table 4.1 shows the complicated pattern that emerges when details provided in the Marriage Register Parish of St. Osburg's for 1850 and 1851, are matched to details in the Census of 1851 recorded on 30th March. Some (Couples: 1, 8, 9, 13, 21, 22) have no obvious connection to Ireland while others with 'Irish' surnames (Couples: 2, 3, 7, 11, 15, 23) may have had, but cannot be located in the census. Almost half of the remaining marriages, amounting to 11 (Couples: 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20) had an identifiable

[65] Census of Great Britain 1851, *Religious worship (England and Wales): Report and Tables* PP 1852–53 LXXXIX [1690] p. cclvi; National Archives HO 129/400 pp. 1-20 These figures included Sunday Scholars although there was none such at St. Osburg's.

[66] Bossy, *English Catholic Community*, p. 5

[67] Census of Great Britain 1851, *Religious worship*, pp. clxxviii, cclliii, cclxi, cclxxii

[68] The link between the troublesome Grogan and Geoghegan families can be seen. Geoghegan was probably the correct spelling of the surname recorded so often in the newspapers as Gahagan.

Irish connection: 6 were comprised of both parties being considered Irishcom (Couples: 10, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19) while the remainder were between Irish and Non-Irish (Couples: 4, 5, 6, 20 and perhaps 16). What cannot be ascertained is if they were mixed marriages, or if not, that such was due to strong discouragement by the priory. It could be suggested that while the clergy did not like mixed marriages there was little in reality they could do about it. It is to be noticed that Bridget Kennedy of Couple 4, and Mary Ann Kennedy Couple 7, shared Michael and Ann as parents. Martin and Patrick Kilroy may well have been siblings who married siblings Ann and Ellen Ryan (Couples 12 and 17). While marriages took place between those in their twenties, older couples married too, with John Elliott marrying at 62 years (Couple 5). His wife Rose came to the attention of the court in 1851 as noted in Appendix 4. A 'hidden' Geoghegan (Gahagan) link to Grogan – then two surnames of disrepute in Coventry is shown for Couple 10. That some were not located in the Census of 1851, but were more settled and recorded in 1861, while others were not located at all in the census, raises interest as to the accuracy of the 1851 census count, and the rapidity of Coventrian egression as exampled between 1850 and 1851.

Catholic identity 1851

The Catholic sense of identity which migrant households could possess was visible in the 1851 census on 3 occasions.[69] Though not required by the census William Miller, 29 years, gave his occupation as 'Roman Catholic labourer' and his wife Julia, 30 years, as 'Roman Catholic seamstress'. Similarly Martin Lyons, 38 years, stated his occupation as 'Roman Catholic labourer' while his wife Elizabeth, 33 years, stated 'Roman Catholic no trade'. All were Irish-born living in Greyfriars Lane.[70] The Pat Hopkins household in Leicester Street similarly expressed itself (Table 4.2).[71]

The 'Catholics of Coventry' 1891

Background of those who signed the address given at the marking of the 25th anniversary of Rev. Father Pereira's ordination.

T.R. Donnelly was a 48 year old Birmingham-born architect from Bath Tce.; **James Pinches** was a 54 year old watch fitter and timer, born in Foleshill and lived at 125 Spon St.; His Coventry-born son **James C. Pinches** was a later signature on the list.[72] He was a 24 year old tobacconist assistant and resided at Jubilee Tce. on Lower Ford St.; **Albert Gooney** 29 years, was a railway goods clerk born in Lower Weedon and resided at 8a Lamb St.; **William Boissonaide** 51 years, was a Derby-born watchmaker from 12 Lord St whose wife was Irish; **Arthur H. Barnacle** 27 years, was a Coventry-born watchmaker residing at 8 Gas St; **Philip Cox** 48 years, was a Coventry-born master watch motioner who resided at 8 Lord St.; **Arthur Cole** 30 years, was a Coventry-born tailor and woollen draper that resided at 2 Russell Tce.; **John Griffin** 22 years, was a Birmingham-born butcher who resided at 77 Stony Stanton Rd. (his brother was to become a Benedictine Priest); **Charles T Hewitt** 52 years, was a Coventry-born watchmaker from 81 Craven St.; **Isaac Holmes** 63 years, was the Irish-born Postmaster

[69] Such 'Roman Catholic' mention only featured in the 1851 census.

[70] HO107/2067.334-335.3-5 ED 17

[71] The census entries for the Hopkins' household are also provided for later years since they illustrate the deterioration of a Famine-era nuclear family as a unit in merely twenty years. From the 1860s onwards it would be the children of these families that came into prominence as the 'Irish'. In viewing the Table it is to be recognised that these people had actually experienced the trauma of the Famine years, with the age gap between sons Michael and Pat suggesting either the death of Michael's mother, or was a hiatus caused by the death ofsome siblings. According to Martin's birthplace they had arrived about two months before the taking of the census.

[72] James C. Pinches may have been friendly with the Tews who also signed the address, because Joseph A Tew a 19 years old butcher's assistant was visiting him on Census day.

from 5 Allesley Rd.; **Thomas Hennessey** 54 years, was an Irish-born boot maker who resided at 2 Well Street (Appendix 2); **Sidney Hancocks** 39 years, was a Coventry-born telegraph clerk, at Station Buildings, Warwick Rd.; **Denis McVeagh** 66 years, was a Dublin-born physician who lived at 3 Quadrant (Appendix 2); **Thomas McNeill** 58 years, was an Irish-born bricklayer's labourer who had resided in Coventry since the late 1850s and now resided in H429C Much Park St.; **Joseph Randle** was a 59 years, old silk weaver from Foleshill; **William Ryan** 32 years, was a Canterbury-born watch finisher from 34 East St. His father was from Scotland; **Martin A. Tew** 46 years, was a Coventry-born butcher from 4 Jordan Well; **Arthur Tew** 33 years, was a Shilton-born farm labourer from Brinklow; **George Tew** 46 years, was a Coventry-born estimator of crops from 40 Freehold St; **Joseph H Watts** 52 years, was a Coventry-born watch finisher from 46 Gas St.[73]; **Joseph Doran** 48 years, was the Coventry-born son of Thomas and Mary Doran, who were Dublin-born ribbon weavers, who resided in Bradford St. in 1871. Also residing with them then was his Dublin-born widowed mother-in-law Ann Beaver who was first found in the census of 1851. Her son was the signatory **James Patrick Beever** 59 years, who was a Coventry-born watchmaker living at 10 Hill Cross. Anne Doran who was Joseph's sister was a domestic housekeeper to Albert Gooney above in 1901 and was described as his wife when she died in 1917.

Consecration of the Catholic Cathedral in Nottingham 1844

Morning Post 30th August 1844:

> 'Large numbers crowded to witness the celebration of a grand pontifical mass, performed in a style of splendour unknown to this country since the Reformation. The bishops of the Romish church are not permitted to appear in full canonicals out of their respective dioceses, but on this occasion the special permission of the Holy Father, at Rome, Pope Gregory XVI., had been procured. No fewer than fourteen bishops, and more than a hundred priests assisted in the celebration. The magnificence of the attire of the bishops, the long train of white robed priests, the many coloured hues of light reflected through the painted windows, the ancient architectural embellishments of the lofty arches, the deep solemn tones of the noble organ, touched with a master's skill, interrupted only by the plaintive and monotonous chanting of the choristers, gave an effect to the scene which no pen can describe, and which powerfully brought back to mind the ancient glories of Papal worship.'

Later in the day Dr Wiseman gave a satisfied – if not triumphal - address to almost 400 persons, comprising bishops, dignitaries and 'fashionable company' assembled for a 'splendid cold collation' in the Exchange hall. The address included an inventory of achievement:

> 'I hope to see England covered with churches, the architecture of which will be built after the ancient models. …in six years we have an aggregate of 54 new Catholic churches, …built on good principles, and on the scale of the largest buildings in the country, in the largest and most populous towns in the kingdom, such as London, Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester, Derby, Nottingham, Newcastle, Newark, Coventry, and other similar places. The church which has

[73] Two other possibilities were Joseph Watts 61 years, a Coventry-born builder's labourer from C1Cook St. or Joseph Watts 52 years, a Coventry-born watchmaker from 14 Chauntry Place. The reason for the choice of the Joseph Watts that was selected is because he lived in Gas Street which was close to St. Osburg's.

this day opened is the largest now finished in this country since the Reformation. When St. George's in London, is completed, it will be the largest in London, except St Paul's (cheers)… [In the last six years] There are nineteen new communities of nuns established in England…nine houses of religious men… Catholic books are now bought and read in the most eager manner by all classes of religions. These facts must also be looked at in connexion with the extra-ordinary movement now going on in the very heart of the church of England. During the last few years nine clergymen of the church have joined the unity of the Catholic faith in England, and no inconsiderable number of young men, destined for the ministry, have transferred themselves to our dear church, and become candidates for a better and a truer priesthood… A few years ago we dared not have assembled as we have met to-day; we could not have gone through the town in our ecclesiastical habits; we might not even have made our circuits round our church in the midst of an immense concourse of people, without receiving taunts, insults, and, perhaps, personal ill treatment (cheers).'

Education

The *Coventry Herald* 22nd December 1882:

'St. Osburg's School Hill Street. The examinations of the above named schools were held in September last year by the Rev. H.M. Capel, Her Majesty's Inspector, and the certificates, &c., awarded to 291 successful scholars were distributed on Friday last, 15th inst, by Father Ambrose Pereira, the manager of the school. He congratulated teachers and scholars on the successful result of the examinations – the boys passing 97 per cent, the girls 90, and the infants 87. He exhorted teachers and children to persevere earnestly in working hard, and said he felt certain that all were animated with the proper sense of duty, and all were anxious that the schools they loved so well should continue to maintain the high position they now held in public opinion as being one of the most efficient elementary schools of the city.'

The *Coventry Herald* 18th August 1882 provided a return for St. Osburg's and St. Mary's shown in Table A.6.2:

Table A.6.2
St. Osburg's and St. Mary's: School Attendance Figures 1882

	Average Attendance	Highest No. present at one time	No. on books	Accom-modation
St. Osburg's				
Boys	123	143	160	202
Girls	115	130	150	150
Infants	137	161	205	226
St. Mary's				
Girls	177	189	216	240
Infants	151	175	200	200

Appendix 7

Workhouse, Barracks and other 'Institutions'
See Appendix 17 for considerations on the treatment of 'Institutions'in this study.

City Irish 1841: Irishcom 1,040 Irish-born 565
'Institutions'
Of 184 residents of the Barracks: Irishcom 143 (Irish-born 118)
Of 233 residents of the Workhouse: Irishcom 15 (Irish-born 10)
Of 56 occupants of the Gaol: Irishcom 4 (Irish-born 4)

City Irish 1851: Irishcom 1,545 Irish-born 892
'Institutions'
Of 169 residents of the Barracks: Irishcom 117 (Irish-born 84)
Of 224 residents of the Workhouse: Irishcom 17 (Irish-born 16)
Of 69 occupants of the Gaol: Irishcom 3 (Irish-born 3)
Of 29 occupants of Industrial Home, Leicester Street: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)

City Irish 1861: Irishcom 1,566 Irish-born 795
'Institutions'
Of 236 residents of the Barracks: Irishcom 86 (Irish-born 72)
Of 275 residents of the Workhouse: Irishcom 9 (Irish-born 9)
Of 6 occupants of the Police Station: Irishcom 2 (Irish-born 2)
Of 28 occupants of the Hospital, Little Park St: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 9 occupants of Primrose Hill Academy: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 9 occupants of the Blue Coat School: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)

Irish 1871: Irishcom 1,162 Irish-born 496
'Institutions'
Of 169 residents of the Barracks: Irishcom 26 (Irish-born 16)
Of 286 residents of the Workhouse: Irishcom 18 (Irish-born 15)
Of 34 occupants of the Hospital, Stoney Stanton Road: Irishcom 1(Irish-born 1)
Of 29 occupants of Primrose Hill Boarding School: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 15 occupants the Convent, No 11 Gosford Terrace: Irishcom 3 (Irish-born 3)
Of 9 occupants of the Convent, No 12 Gosford Terrace: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 10 occupants of the Convent, No 44 Raglan Street: Irishcom 5 (Irish-born 5)
Of 39 occupants of the Industrial Home, Leicester Street: Irishcom 2 (Irish-born 2)
Of 33 occupants of Bablake School: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)

Irish 1881: Irishcom 848 Irish-born 368
'Institutions'
Of 162 residents of the Barracks: Irishcom 15 (Irish-born 15)
Of 423 residents of the Workhouse: Irishcom 14 (Irish-born 14)
Of 70 occupants of Coventry Hospital: Irishcom 2 (Irish-born 2)
Of 15 occupants of Primrose Hill House: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 24 occupants of the Convent, No 11Gosford Terrace: Irishcom 2 (Irish-born 2)
Of 30 occupants of Radford House Boarding School: Irishcom 7 (Irish-born 7)
Of 11 occupants of RC School, No 49 Raglan Street: Irishcom 4 (Irish-born 4)

Irish 1891: Irishcom 711 Irish-born 347
'Institutions'
Of 155 residents of the Barracks: Irishcom 39 (Irish-born 33)
Of 366 residents of the Workhouse: Irishcom 13 (Irish-born 13)
Of 13 occupants of the Fever Hospital: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 13 occupants of RC School, Gosford Green: Irishcom 4 (Irish-born 4)
Of 20 occupants of Radford House Boarding School: Irishcom 5 (Irish-born 5)
Of 11 occupants of the Convent, No 47 Raglan Street: Irishcom 3 (Irish-born 3)

Irish 1901: Irishcom 862 Irish-born 417
'Institutions'
Of 131 residents of the Barracks: Irishcom 14 (Irish-born 11)
Of 455 residents of the Workhouse: Irishcom 14 (Irish-born 14)
Of 90 occupants of Coventry Hospital: Irishcom 4 (Irish-born 4)
Of 15 occupants of Ford Hospital: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 24 occupants of the school at 8 & 9 Quadrant: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 50 occupants of King Henry VIII School, Spencer Road: Irishcom 3 (Irish-born 3)
Of 50 occupants of Girls Industrial Home, Leicester Street: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 28 occupants of St. Joseph's School, Gosford Terrace: Irishcom 4 (Irish-born 4)
Of 20 occupants of College House, Holyhead Road: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 10 occupants of the Convent, No 47 Raglan Street: Irishcom 4 (Irish-born 4)
Of 25 occupants of Queens Hotel: Irishcom 2 (Irish-born 2)
Of 25 occupants of Kings Head Hotel: Irishcom 2 (Irish-born 2)

Coventry Workhouse

The ancient monastery of Whitefriars was converted in 1804 into a workhouse or 'House of Industry'. It had been extended subsequently so that by 1843 while it could hold 450 to 500 mixed paupers, it could but safely hold 320. The actual number residing depended on the prosperity of the town over the years. Searby provided an example of the balance between workhouse relief and outdoor relief by indicating during the 1832 slump, 414 paupers resided in the workhouse and 694 families were in receipt of outdoor relief.[1] In the 1830s and 1840s there were usually between 200 and 300 workhouse occupants. During the years between the passing in 1834 of 'The Poor Law Amendment Act' and 1842, the workhouse regime remained semi-independent from that of the Poor Law Commissioners, due to the operation of a local law. Conditions in the workhouse were not as harsh as the Commissioners believed necessary to deter those seeking relief. The Commissioners complained about inmates being allowed to go outside the workhouse on Sundays and having a daily beer allowance. They felt that outdoor relief should be curtailed and relief only available within the workhouse.[2] Until 1842 the influence of Commissioners was kept at a remove although the quantity of food was restricted by a quarter in 1837. Cholera broke out in the workhouse population of 228 in 1838 which caused 63 deaths among children and adults, at which time it was noted, the workhouse was far too cold and residents clothing was inadequate. The Baptismal Register for St. Mary and St. Laurence records Fr Cockshoot's 31 baptisms at the workhouse at the beginning of that year.[3] The workhouse was assimilated into

[1] Searby, Relief of the Poor, p. 353
[2] 'The City of Coventry: Local government and public services: Public services', pp. 275-298
[3] Family History Centre, National Archives, 1999854 pp. 35-38

national arrangements from 1842. Henceforth discipline was firmer, the sexes kept apart and inmates movements beyond the workhouse were restricted.[4]

Table A.7.1 Coventry Workhouse 1841
Total pauper population 228 included 15 (6.57%) here listed[5]

Name	Age: Male	Age: Female	Occupation	Born
Mark Gordon	70		Tramp	Ireland
Edward Smith	30		Tramp	Ireland
James Oniel	40		Tramp	Ireland
John Laddie	30			Ireland
Ellen Pears		65		Ireland
Mary Hassett		30		Ireland
Margaret Hall		55		Ireland
Jane Eagins		25		Ireland
Mary Hands		40		Ireland
Mary Manton		75		Ireland
Mary Hassett		5		Derbyshire
Esther Hassett		3		Derbyshire
Christopher Hassett	9			Derbyshire
Thomas Hassett	6			Derbyshire
John Hassett	5m			Derbyshire

Table A.7.2 Coventry Workhouse 1851
Total relieved population of 224 included 15 (6.69%) here listed[6]

Name	Status	Marital Condition	A:M	A:F	Occupation	Born
Ann Dagnan	Pauper	M		28		Roscommon
Mark Gordon	Pauper	Wdr	84		Plush weaver	Dublin
Mary Handy (Blind)	Pauper	W		51		Tarbert Kerry
Margaret McGuire	Pauper	W		62	Washerwoman	Castleblaney
Margaret McEvoy	Pauper	W		26	Vagrant	Mayo Killa~
James McEvoy	Pauper		6			Mayo Foxford
Mary McEvoy	Pauper			2		Liverpool
Eliza O Connell	Pauper	Deserted		10		Ireland not known
John Kirwan	Pauper+Tramp	U	39		Shoemaker	Galway
John Foaden	Pauper+Tramp	U	28		Labourer	Roscommon
John Dunn	Pauper+Tramp	U	30		Labourer	Fiddown Kilkenny
John Jackson	Pauper+Tramp	U	16		Labourer	Glenamady Galway
Thomas Flanagan	Pauper+Tramp	U	20		Labourer	Dublin
John Hines	Pauper+Tramp	U	20		Labourer	Dublin
Thomas Bailey	Pauper+Tramp	U	24		Labourer	Dublin

[4] Searby, Relief of the Poor, p. 351
[5] HO 107/1152.Book 14.35 ED House of Industry
[6] HO 107/2067.711.1 ED Workhouse

Table A.7.3 Coventry Workhouse 1861
Total relieved population of 266 included 9 (3.38%) here listed[7]

Name	Status	Marital Condition	A:M	A:F	Occupation	Born
Robert Broughill	Pauper +Inmate	M	78		Weaver Ribbon	Dublin
John Egan	Pauper +Inmate	M	81		Weaver Ribbon	Dublin
Ann Egan	Pauper +Inmate	M		81	Weaver Ribbon	Dublin
Wm Elston	Pauper +Inmate	Wdr	60		Weaver Ribbon	Dublin
John Field	Pauper +Inmate	Wdr	73		Weaver Ribbon	Dublin
John Hassett	Pauper +Inmate	Sing	62		Weaver Ribbon	Dublin
Michael ~	Pauper +Inmate	M	69		Weaver Ribbon	Dublin
John ~	Pauper +Inmate	Sing	52		Weaver Ribbon	Dublin
Wm Mack	Pauper +Inmate	Wdr	64		Weaver Ribbon	Dublin

Table A.7.4 Coventry Workhouse 1871
Total relieved population of 278 included 18 (6.47%) here listed[8]

Name	Status	Marital Condition	A:M	A: F	Occupation	Born
John Blackwood	Pauper +Inmate	Wdr	71		Formerly mariner	Ireland
Michael Brennan	Pauper +Inmate	M	50		Former bricklayer's lab	Ireland
Mary Brennan	Pauper +Inmate	U		27	Formerly domestic serv	Ireland
Elizabeth Connor	Pauper +Inmate	M		37	Formerly domestic serv	Ireland
Elizabeth Connor	Pauper +Inmate			13	Scholar	Coventry
John Connor	Pauper +Inmate		1			Coventry
Maria Cave	Pauper +Inmate	M		45	Wife of a bricklayer	Ireland
Margaret Devanagh	Pauper +Inmate	W		39	Formerly domestic serv	Ireland
Margaret Devanagh	Pauper +Inmate			3	Scholar	Coventry
John Field	Pauper +Inmate	Wdr	84		Formerly ribbon weaver	Ireland
Richard Gallighan	Pauper +Inmate	Wdr	90		Formerly ag labourer	Ireland
Luke Haggerty	Pauper +Inmate	Wdr	76		Formerly tailor	Ireland
Michael Kennedy	Pauper +Inmate	M	80		Formerly ribbon weaver	Ireland
Henry Kelley	Pauper +Inmate	Wdr	65		Formerly ribbon weaver	Ireland
Bridget McGuire	Pauper +Inmate	W		73		Ireland
John McIntyre	Pauper +Inmate	M	71		Formerly hawker	Ireland
John McMahon	Pauper +Inmate	Wdr	70		Formerly trunk maker	Ireland
Hannah Shaw	Pauper +Inmate	W		64		Ireland

[7] RG 9/2201.122 En Book 1A
[8] RG10/3178.122 En Book 1d

Table A.7.5 Coventry Workhouse 1881
Total relieved population of 413 included 13 (3.14%) here listed[9]

Name	Status	Marital Condition	A:M	A:F	Occupation	Born
Thomas McCall	Inmate	Wdr	81		Ribbon Weaver	Ireland
John Kennardy	Inmate		72		Ribbon Weaver	Dublin
Henry Kelly	Inmate	Wdr	72		Ribbon Weaver	Ireland
Michael Karn	Inmate		70		Agri Labourer	Ireland
James Calligan	Inmate		67		Agri Labourer	Ireland
John McIntyre	Inmate	M	71		Tailor	Ireland
William Lamprey	Inmate	Wdr	84		Hawker	Ireland
Thomas Ryley	Inmate	M	61		Agri Labourer	Ireland
William Robinson	Inmate	M	61		Agri Labourer	Ireland
Dan McCarthy	Inmate		61		Shoemaker	Ireland
William Lynes	Inmate	Wdr	63		Agri Labourer	Ireland
Phoebe Sydenham	Inmate	W		73	Domestic Servant	Ireland
Mary Ann Brennan	Inmate			38	Domestic Servant	Ireland

Table A.7.6 Coventry Workhouse 1891
Total relieved population of 329 included 13 (3.95%) here listed[10]

Name	Status	Marital Condition	A:M	A:F	Occupation	Born
Mary Brannon	Inmate			48	Ribbon Weaver	Ireland
James Callaghan	Inmate		76		Gen Labourer	Ireland
Ellen Gallaghan	Inmate	W		62	Charwoman	Ireland
Kearns Thomas	Inmate	M	69		Gen Labourer	Ireland
Ellen Kearns	Inmate	M		71		Ireland
James O Brien	Inmate		30		Farm Labourer	Ireland
Catherine Gallaghan	Inmate	W		63	Charwoman	Ireland
James Harris	Inmate	Wdr	77		Farm Labourer	Ireland
John Moran	Inmate	Wdr	71		Gen Labourer	Ireland
James Reaney	Inmate	Wdr	72		Gen Labourer	Ireland
John Shaughnessy	Inmate	Wdr	64		Hawker	Ireland
Thomas Taylor	Inmate		56		Farm Labourer	Ireland
Thomas Jones	Inmate		50		Gen Labourer	Ireland

[9] RG11/3070.113 En Book Workhouse
[10] RG12/2451.151 En Book Workhouse

Table A.7.7 Coventry Workhouse 1901
Total relieved population of 437 included 13 (2.97%) here listed after Minnie Elliott an Irish-born member of the staff[11]

Name	Status	Marital Condition	A:M	A:F	Occupation	Born
Minnie Elliott	Officer	U		25	Sick Nurse	Ireland
Mary Brandon	Pauper	W		67	Charwoman R	Ireland
Mark Burns	Pauper	M	64		General labourer R	Ireland
James Callaghan	Pauper	Wdr	86		General labourer R	Ireland
Patrick Corfield	Pauper	Wdr	83		General labourer R	Ireland
Mary Fallon	Pauper	Wid		83	Charwoman R	Ireland
John Killen	Pauper	Wdr	83			Ireland
Michael LLewelleyn	Pauper	Wdr	73		Shoemaker R	Ireland
Michael Monaghan	Pauper	Wdr	76		General labourer R	Ireland
William O Neil	Pauper	M		76	General labourer R	Ireland
Ellen Rollins	Pauper	Wid		70	Hawker R	Ireland
Rose Serrin	Pauper	U		50	Charwoman	Ireland
John Walton	Pauper	M	46		Painter	Ireland
John Dillon	Casual pauper	M	57		General labourer	Ireland

Between 1841-1901 Irish occupancy of the workhouse never rose above 7.0%, though it is not known if there was an informal maximum limit on Irish intake. There was probably an effective limit on the number of tramps admitted due to the capacity of the casual wards. On any occasion when a census was taken the Irish did not overwhelm the workhouse. There was an almost complete change of clientele at each census apart from Mark Gordon in 1841 who was again recorded in 1851, and John Field in 1861 who was found again in 1871. Allowing for deaths between censuses, and the relatively young age of some of those in Table A.7.1, it is understandable that, apart from the aged Mark Gordon who had little alternative, nobody recorded in 1841 could be found in Coventry in 1851. Neither could anyone in Coventry or its workhouse in 1851 be found in the workhouse in 1861. John Field who had perhaps little option due to age was found in 1861 and 1871 lists. Between 8 and 10 of Irish background found in Coventry city in 1861 were present in the workhouse in 1871. They were it would appear in workhouse terms of admittance considered as settled Coventrians rather than perceived foremost as footloose Irish.

Those who had in their youth arrived in 1840s, were elderly by the 1870s and not having prospered, or having any relative to offer assistance, were faced with the reality of the workhouse. Labourers wore out easily ‘when a labouring man turned the age of fifty (and in heavy jobs much earlier) his strength and quickness began to desert him…Old age was anything but a pleasant anticipation of retirement for a labouring man. With no provision for an income, unable to continue with his job, and in failing health, the most he could hope for himself and his wife was a corner by the fireside in his children’s home in return for such odd jobs as they could manage. If this were not available the only place for them to go was the workhouse’.[12] Conditions in the workhouse towards the end of the century may have been less grim and the prospect of entering not as bleak. In Coventry an infirmary was added to the workhouse in 1889.

[11] RG13/2908.139.1 ED Workhouse
[12] J.F.C. Harrison, *Early Victorian Britain, 1832-51*, (London 1971) p. 59

Generally admission to such infirmaries was permitted to those who were poor but not so destitute that they they required admission to the workhouse itself.[13]

In keeping with the regulation separating the sexes in the workhouse, males and females are separately enumerated en-masse with children under 16 also separated by sex and distinguished from adults. Within the 15 Irish component of the 1841 workhouse, 3 Irish male vagrants were distinguished (out of the 10 vagrants listed). Apart from the 3 Irish vagrants there was 1 other Irish born among the 79 workhouse men, 6 Irish born among the 86 women, 3 Irish parented boys among 36 boys, and 2 Irish parented girls among 27 girls. The 5 mentioned young children belonged to Mary Hassett a young Irish-born mother aged 30 who had recently arrived from Derbyshire. The reason for her move to Coventry and the whereabouts of the father invites speculation.

In the 1851 workhouse, the census recorded 8 Irish-born among the 81 men, and 4 Irish-born women among the 58 women, 1 Irish-born boy among the 46 boys and 2 Irish associated girls among the 31 girls. Once again was recorded a family headed by a young female, Irish-born vagrant Mary McEvoy, a widow at 26, who had had arrived from Liverpool with 2 children within the previous two years. The enumeration in 1851 provided the most detailed information on Irish area of origin of residents, with Dublin, Mayo, Galway and Roscommon obvious. It also had a youthful profile, with 6 unmarried labourers under 30 years of age in residence; these youthful labourers and an older shoemaker were referred to as tramps. Male tramps almost invariably described themselves as labourers.[14] The occupational description of the 7 tramps as labourers in the 1851 census evokes the question as to how wide a range of effort the title labourer embraced.

For 1861 the 3.4% Irish proportion of the total pauper population does not provide the complete picture. This is due to the absence of 7 pages that provided details on 166 residents, which were at the end of the enumeration book of approx 130 Folios. Fortunately the summary page placed at the beginning of the book records the totals and summary for all 11 pages. In the four pages available which had 95 men, 1 woman, 3 boys and 1 girl, there were 9 Irish-born inmates all remarkably ribbon weavers from Dublin. The only woman was Irish-born Ann Egan who was wife to another inmate John Egan. Initially it appears the enumerator duplicated Irish occupation and birthplace details but in fact in the 4 pages available, the enumeration, in alphabetical order, was meticulous with 58 weavers enumerated. (Their residency reflecting the miserable position of Coventry weavers noted earlier in 1861). Since the sexes were separately enumerated with women following men, it is more likely that the missing pages would have contained details of Irish born women and Irish-born or Irish associated children.

In 1871 there were 117 men inmates, 9 of whom were Irish men, while of the 75 women inmates 6 were Irish born. Of 48 boys, 1 was an Irish associated boy and of 26 girls 2 were Irish associated girls. There were 3 Irish family units residing: Elizabeth Connor (Born: Roscommon) and her two children (Born: West Bromwich and Coventry); Margaret Devanagh and her young daughter; and Michael Brennan and his adult unmarried daughter.[15] The aged Richard Galligan was previously introduced during an analysis of H1Court 22 Much Park Street in 1861 consequent on Greenhow's report.

The occupations entered ranged from ribbon weaving, bricklaying, various types of labouring, shoemaking, tailoring, domestic service, to hawking. The 1861 census provided supplemental detail to show that John McMahon, the trunk maker, had also made umbrellas, while Bridget McGuire and Hannah Shaw from Cork for whom no

[13] The Workhouse, http://www.workhouses.org.uk/coventry/ Accessed 3rd March 2019
[14] Reports on Vagrancy, p. 36
[15] In 1861 Elizabeth Connor and family resided in 1C17 Much Park St. See Table 3.17 and Figure 3.5.

occupation was declared were charwomen in 1861. John had lived in Derby Lane with his Irish-born wife who was a ladies nurse. From 1871 Mary Brennan (described as imbecilic in 1881) continued to live in the workhouse into 1891. Henry Kelly recorded in 1871 was also found in 1881.

The differentiation between pauper inmates and mobile trampers who were given shelter in the workhouse is to noted. A specific reference to the Irish was made at the time of the Famine influx by John Gulson, Chairman, The Board of Directors of the Poor of Coventry who reported:

> 'In the quarter ended 18th June last [1847], the number of trampers admitted and relieved averaged upwards of 143 per week, viz., 73 English, 66 Irish, and 3 Scotch and the fractions making a total in the 13 weeks of 953 English, 865 Irish, and 49 Scotch: total, 1867. That out of this number there were 81 cases of Irish fever, in consequence of which temporary fever wards were obliged to be erected to prevent, if possible, the infection being communicated to the inmates, and three of the persons employed to wait on the fever patients died of the fever. That out of the above number, six were committed to prison for refractory conduct, and 60 at least were guilty of gross insubordination, but were considered too worthless to prosecute….That at or about the above period of the year this influx of trampers annually takes place, who almost without exception, are not only ungrateful for the relief they obtain, but are very liberal in dealing out their abuse to the officers of the establishment.'[16]

This report by Gulson on Coventry fortunately gave nationality of origin and while registering the extent of fever and unruly behaviour to the Poor Law Board did not express the same sense of alarm found in reports from elsewhere.[17] Some examples may be mentioned on the Liverpool to London axis of incidents of infectious disease – typhus fever, which was carried by, and afflicted the Irish. At Stafford Union workhouse there was over 300 cases referred to as 'Irish fever' from March 1847. At Newcastle-under-Lyme it was stated that there 'never had [been] any sickness in the house, until the Irish arrived'. There were a great many cases of Irish fever in Wolverhampton workhouse, brought in by Irish town residents, with several inmates catching it from washing the clothes of those infected. At Birmingham workhouse it was said 'we have had the Irish fever in the house most severely, having lost about 20 officers by it (including medical officers). *I do not attribute its introduction to tramps but to the resident Irish*'.[18] South west of Coventry at Daventry workhouse, 44 cases of fever among the Irish were reported in the 12 months from circa mid-1846. There were no deaths, but some very bad cases, and the nurse attending them died and her family caught the disease as did the replacement nurse. There were several fever cases in Daventry town 'in the neighbourhood of the lodging-houses used by the Irish'.[19]

The refractory conduct noted by Gulson was also experienced by other Unions, who were more expansive about their concerns. Many drew attention to their influx of Irish and attendant problems. Union managers mentioned the filthy condition of the Irish, their willingness through travelling in circuits to take advantage of different Union's accommodation and their crafty disposition. Many Union officers were intrigued as to how the Irish had found funds for the passage from Ireland, and officers tried to tease out what was the motivation and status of the trampers. Some were seen as professional mendicants, beggars or cadgers - the dregs of society, more politely named

---

[16] Reports on Vagrancy, pp. 89-90

[17] Workhouse records of admissions and discharges commenced in 1853.

[18] Italic emphasis by the Clerk of the Workhouse.

[19] Reports on Vagrancy, pp. 36-37. When referring to these towns p. 37 said: 'At Coventry between 30 and 40 tramps have been in the workhouse with infectious diseases since the beginning of last year [1846], none of whom died; but two nurses caught the tramp fever and died'.

as casual or wayfaring poor, others as harvesters using workhouses as convenient summer lodgings, while others were seen as Irish families in a state of appalling destitution. They noted examples where the vagrants were suspected of intimidating and criminal behaviour, belligerently breaking windows if refused entry, nominating a person as banker or 'captain' to hold their money and who would stay clear of a workhouse, a tactic which would allow the vagrants to appear without means if searched in the workhouse. The vagrants were seen operating under a number of aliases, male vagrants avoiding the workhouse but sending to it for accommodation their women and children, and as a lifestyle refusing to work. Union officers sensibilities were offended by young able bodied who preferred to remain idle and who resisted any attempt to discipline them.[20]

The 'Reports' published in 1848 on vagrancy were produced at a particular time of crisis and perhaps reflect abnormal circumstances more than the happenings over a long period of time. Contributors refer time and again to the 'influx' and 'torrent' of Irish immigrants.[21] The Irish vagrants were seen as disease carriers and their increasing numbers caused particular concern. Vagrancy was a serious social problem that involved, as Gulson mentioned, English vagrants as much as the Irish, but there was still a belief that the Irish had answerability for vagrancy. In the 1848 Report it was stated 'There are a great many, perhaps nearly half of the Irish now in England who have abided with us all last winter filling the refuges and absorbing the greater part of the charities distributed at that season. I have no hesitation in expressing as my opinion that many called English vagrants are of Irish origin, though I cannot go so far as some, who, having devoted much attention to the subject, are of opinion that all our vagrants (speaking generally) are of Irish origin'.[22]

[20] Ibid., pp. 10, 13, 18, 23, 24, 56, 58, 74, 78
[21] Ibid., pp. 10, 54, 59, 65, 77
[22] Ibid., p. 18

The Barracks

Table A.7.8 Irish presence in Barracks, Smithford Street, 1841-1901								
Year	Total Irish-Born in city	Occupants of Coventry Barracks	Total Male Occ-upants	Total Female Occ-upants	Irish-Born Occ-upants	Irish -com Occ-upants	Irish-Born Married Male if Family Resident	Irish-Born Male Individuals
1841	555	6th Dragoons	140	44	118	142	15	82
1851	698	4th Dragoons	123	46	83	116	11	51
1861	704	4th Dragoons	195	41	72	85	6	59
1871	486	Royal Artillery C Brig., E Batt	140	29	16	26	0	7
1881	366	Royal Artillery No 2 Brigade	144	18	15	15	0	15
1891	346	Royal Artillery	134	21	33	39	2	15
1901	416	Royal Artillery	123	8	11	12	2	10
HO107/1152 Book 14.22.1 ED Coventry Barracks; HO107/2067.377.9 ED 19; RG9/2203.36.6 ED 19; RG10/3176.46.6 ED 15; RG11/3067.78.5 ED15; RG12/2451.161.1 ED Barracks; RG13/2908.151.1 ED His Majesty's Barracks								

Smithford street Barracks was established in 1793[23] Mallinson noted that following the success at Waterloo, demobilisation led to an army one quarter of its pre-war strength that nevertheless was still the largest ever in peace-time.[24] About 50,000 troops resided in the United Kingdom (including Ireland). Law and order was the concern of the army, and the threat from prevalent post-war unrest meant there continued to be more cavalry regiments than was envisaged, who were usually not sent overseas. In 1830 the army was almost 40% Irish and in 1868 there were 55,000 in the ranks.[25] Located in the centre of the city, the barracks contained personnel who were transient and had variable numbers of Irish and so influenced the totals of Irish-born shown for Coventry in Census Abstracts. The number of Irish in the Barracks fell away after 1861. See Table A.7.8.

1841

In 1841 the 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons were enumerated in the Barracks. The 6th were also stationed in the 1841 census in Birmingham. They had returned from the Napoleonic Wars in 1816 and until they left to engage in the Crimean War were involved in routine soldiering. In 1831 out of a total strength of 279 rank and file, 226 were Irish.[26] In the next ten years, according to birthplace of children, they had been stationed in Ireland, Scotland, in an English county that was not Warwickshire and had come from Ireland previous within two months to the 1841 census. It would appear they were in Woolwich in 1851.

[23] In Birmingham, Great Brook Street Barracks was also opened in 1793, and accommodated 162 men and horses. This was built because the city had to wait for aid from the army during the riots of 1791.
[24] Allan Mallinson, *The Making of the British Army*, (London 2009) p. 200
[25] Robert Winder, *Bloody* Foreigners, (London 2004) p. 198
[26] R.G. Harris, *The Irish Regiments 1683-1999*, (Staplehurst Kent 1989) pp. 56, 57, 59

1851

The 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards spent most of the nineteenth century on English and Irish garrison duties. They served in Ireland in the 1830s and suppressed Chartist riots in Birmingham in 1839. Since 1841 they had been stationed in Leeds, Ireland, Scotland, Leicester, Sheffield and Nottingham and had come within the last 11 months from Manchester. They were present as a deterrent when Chartist activity increased in Nottingham in 1848. They saw active service in Crimea 1854-56 and arrived back in Aldershot in 1856.[27]

1861

The 4th Dragoon Guards were stationed in Coventry Barracks in 1861. The 4th Dragoons had two distinct troops. They also occupied the Cavalry Barracks, Aston, Birmingham in 1861 (150 cavalrymen and their horses). They had in the previous 10 years served in Manchester, Leicestershire, Shropshire, Ireland, Manchester again, Sheffield, Woolwich and had come from Aldershot in September 1860. However apart from Thomas Burke, an unmarried private in 1851, matching a similar named soldier who was ten years older than him in 1861, the 1851 personnel was completely different from that of 1861. Either the Crimean War took its toll (¼ did not return), or many retired on its conclusion to be replaced by younger recruits. From 1847 the minimum length of service was ten years for cavalry'.

1871

RA 86 (Royal Artillery) Captain Thomas P Smith with 168 personnel had just arrived from Sheffield having been in Manchester in the previous year, Maidstone two years earlier and Aldershot three years previously.

1881

Captain E.C. Trollope of the Royal Artillery was in charge of 161 personnel of whom 15 were Irish-born. These comprised 1 Sergeant, 8 Gunners and 6 Drivers.

1891

Dublin-born, 44 year old, Major Robert Purdy of the Royal Artillery commanded 38 other Irishcom of whom 32 were Irish-born, and a further 116 personnel.

1901

A compliment of 131 personnel of the Royal Field Artillery were in occupation that included 14 Irishcom of whom 11 were Irish-born.

[27] Ibid., pp. 21-23

Appendix 8

Reports and Newspaper Articles

Descriptions of the Irish in nearby Birmingham from the Report on State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain 1836:

Rev. T.M. Macdonald, a Birmingham Catholic priest, who would have been a sympathetic observer, and with allowance for the sweeping 'Irish belong to a very low class' remark, that may be attributed to the attitudes of the 1830s, said:

> 'As compared with the English, the Irish belong to a very low class…They are not as good managers as the English; they don't live equally well on equal wages; they don't aspire to the same comforts. They live more for the present moment…If they marry at all they marry very young, but very many men live unmarried…They are not very importunate in applying for charitable relief; they are enduring of privation…I think their mixture with the English raises their habits of economy and increases their love of comfort but deteriorates their morality…The Irish are principally employed for their manual labour; they are rarely employed in departments which require considerable mechanical skill…The Irish from the North are, generally speaking, more managing and thinking than the others: generally they are in rather comfortable circumstances. The Irish of Birmingham chiefly come from Mayo and Roscommon.'

Rev. Edward Peach stated:

> 'In general the Irish marry Irish women. They marry very young, the women 17 or 18, the men 20 or 21 and we do not object to it, as it is the custom among the Irish…The Irish never look for any trade or business; they merely seek to get their living, as their fathers have done, by labour…They never make fortunes or rise in the world…I have never heard of any showing any mechanical skill or talent…A large proportion is given to excessive drinking… Their lodging-houses are dirty filthy places, very small; many sleep in a room, and many not on bedsteads, but on the floor; sometimes father, mother, and three children, are in one bed; they then sleep feet to feet. They are not driven to this state by necessity; but by extravagance. Great numbers live in the wretched lodging-houses when they earn 13s a week…All the Irish trampers are a worthless set. I think the Irish labourers can bear more fatigue than the English, and require less food when they work hard. The Irish population of Birmingham is not, for the most part, in a fluctuating state. They do not change much.'

Rev Ignatius Collingridge, Priest of St. Chad's, Birmingham said:

> 'The Irish work their children very young from seven to ten years of age: some help their fathers, some make matches for their mothers…The Irish in this town are of the lowest class; they appear to come over merely to live…I consider their wretchedness to be the result both of the dislike of the English for intruders, and their own want of industry and skill…Many English would sooner throw away their superfluities than relieve an Irishman…I don't know who would do the hard work of the town, such as mortar-making, brick-making, &c., if it was not for the Irish…the Irish very seldom marry Englishwomen; they are a distinct community.'

George Redfern, Prison-keeper of Birmingham, and Deputy Constable's observation on public-house keeping, an occupation that seemed to him the pinnacle of Irish advancement, is a point of interest to recall during consideration of Coventry. He said:

> 'The Irish rarely intermarry with English women…The Irish do not have large families like the English generally; not more than two or three children…Most of them [Irish labourers] are employed as builders' or plasterers' labourers…Those who come for the harvest some-times stop and work for masons…English mechanics will sooner sweep the streets, or wheel sand, for 6s or 7s a week, than become masons' labourers for 13s a week. If the Irish get into manufactories it is not to learn the trade, but merely as drudges. Many of them rise in the world and better themselves; few rise above public-house keepers. The Irish show less ingenuity and cleverness than any other class of men.'[1]

Daniel O'Connell's visit to Coventry in March 1844

The side of the British psyche that abhors injustice and unfairness was brought to the fore by Daniel O'Connell's visit to Coventry in 1844. The meeting he attended was reported in *Herald* 22nd March 1844 as having been held in St. Mary's Hall to consider Irish grievances.[2] It showed 'The great and the good' of the town had a concerned interest in Irish matters. It was organised by the Mayor Abraham Herbert and attended by Magistrates, Aldermen Town Councillors and clergymen including John Gordon, Dr. Ullathorne, Rev. John Sibree. Rev. E.H. Delf, and Rev. Athanasius Clarkson (Ullathorne's assistant and successor). The presence of Gordon, Delf and Ullathorne in the same room gave the moment an ecumenical accord, that did not appear to continue thereafter given the critical writing of Gordon and the arguments of Delf about the doctrines and behaviour of the Roman Catholic Church. It is to be noted that there was no mention of the position of the local Irish at the meeting.

O'Connell's arrival was signalled by overwhelming applause and handkerchief waving which continued for some time. The mayor expressed 'his deep sympathy for the wrongs and sufferings of the Irish people, and at the same time, his hope that the sympathy evinced by the people of England to Mr O'Connell, would have the effect of cementing the Union between the two countries, which he trusted would be cemented by the eternal principles of justice. There was initially much uproar and attempts to disrupt the meeting in the hall caused by 'the disgraceful confederation too common in Coventry, between the Chartists and the very dregs of Toryism.'[3]

When the hall calmed, Rev. Gordon spoke about the unfair trial O'Connell had recently received as also did Rev. Sibree. The latter said he had travelled nearly a thousand miles in three of the provinces of Ireland about nine years ago and since he returned he was even more interested in the welfare of Ireland and in raising awareness of the need for justice. Following a compelling speech by O'Connell, Dr Ullathorne concluded the meeting by referring to 'the miserable condition of Ireland', which he 'attributed to the injustice and mis-government of which it long had been a victim.' Meanwhile the *Standard* thundered in outrage at O'Connell's visit. A brief sample of its columns of 22nd March 1844 excoriating O'Connell and the meeting illustrates its passion.

---

[1] Report State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain, pp. 1-4

[2] His visit to Birmingham on 14th December 1837 where he addressed a large meeting in the Town Hall was reported in both Coventry newspapers

[3] Searby enlightened that those who interrupted the meeting were members of the White Horse Operative Conservative Association led by William Bourne. 'When reproved by the editor of the *Herald* Bourne replied, "As to my being a Tory agent, I am quite at liberty to please myself as he has to be the gutter for the vomitings of the popularity-hunting partisans of Dan, the one-sided political economising Anti-Corn Law League, or the Lammas land plunderers of Coventry'. (Searby, Weavers and freemen, p. 385).

'…The number of Dissenting Preachers necessary to dilute the Popery of the principal orator had been nicely adjusted - the whole programme arranged and methodised - it is therefore a farce to suppose that any of the poor men who felt this person's presence was an insult to them and to their countrywomen, could get up in reply to each, or any, of their glib and well practiced tongues, begging, in due form of reply to one of their motions, that the hoary Agitator would relieve Coventry from the disgrace of his presence. No, they had but one way to express their disapprobation, and for doing this heartily, enthusiastically, and like men who had been performing a public duty, they were most unfairly and improperly expelled from a public meeting of their countrymen.'[4]

Accounts in Coventry newspapers of the Irish before the Magistrates.

In the *Coventry Standard* 22nd December 1837 'Pat', was depicted as acting like a buffoon, either utilizing overdone grovelling or false naivety in the presence of Magistrates, who with impeccable fairness were to be seen treating the Irish defendant in a non-partisan manner.

> 'An Irish tailor was charged with having offered a country bank-note for £100, at the house of Mr. Webb, in this city, on Saturday evening, and asking for £5 on it, then for £1, or 10s. The note was so ragged it could not be deciphered (sic). Being asked what he was, and how he came by it, he said, "Plase (sic) your honours, I come from Chester; I am a tailor, plase your honours, and was travelling to Hounslow: I found the note, your honours, on the road, and thought I might get a little for it." There was no proof that the note was not genuine, consequently there could be no charge against him: the Magistrates ordered it to be given to him again, and dismissed him. Pat was scarcely able to leave the Office, he was so grateful-"Thank your honours, God bless your honours, thank your worships"-over and over again'.

The *Coventry Herald* 15th October 1859 reported:

> 'Michael Brennan, a not very "nate" son of the Emerald Isle, was brought up, charged with drunkenness and with assaulting Mr Eaves, landlord of the Newdegate Arms, and also assaulting a Police Constable. The defendant, an Irish lodging-house-keeper, who maintains his perpendicular with the assistance of a crutch, honoured Mr Eaves with a call on Tuesday afternoon, and offered a feather bed for sale. Mr Eaves declined to buy it, and the defendant and his man then had some ale. They were about to leave the house without paying for it, when Mr Eaves requested the defendant to go through the disagreeable but necessary ceremony of discharging the recently incurred debt. The defendant disagreed with Mr Eaves as to the propriety of adopting this course, and as the landlord naturally endeavoured to enforce his own peculiar view of the matter, the defendant by way of cutting the Gordian knot of argument, lifted his crutch and endeavoured to strike Mr. Eaves a blow on the head. This intended compliment Mr Eaves managed to evade, but the blow fell on the handle of the door with such effect as to knock it off. The glories of Donnybrook hereupon appeared to flash before the

[4] *Coventry Standard* 22nd March 1844; The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 15th March 1845 reported that O'Connell said in Dublin of his Coventry meeting 'The Radicals rose against me, and it would be a failure, but the Irishmen in Coventry have as broad shoulders as the Irishmen here, and without offending anybody they, by degrees, squeezed themselves into the meeting, and I triumphed there'.

> eyes of the excited Irishman, who succeeded, at one fell swoop, in demolishing a dozen glasses…'[5]

Catherine Bird, it might be suggested, was sportingly drawn out in court. The *Coventry Herald* 28th December 1861 reported under the heading ANOTHER SLIP that she was again charged with being drunk and disorderly in Gosford Street.

> 'When asked what she had to say in answer to the charge, Catherine was eloquent on the subject of her wrongs. In the richest Irish brogue, and with astonishing volubility, she declared that up to last night she had never tasted a single drop of drink since Coventry Fair last. Yesterday morning she went to Church like a good Catholic and returned home as sober as need be, when her husband, "the baste (sic)," charged her with being drunk. She in the most solemn manner said, "No, Tom, by the Holy Saviour I've not had a smell of th'dhrink." Tom would not believe her. Catherine became indignant, and said "the bad word that she ought not." She further declared that if the only reward for her abstinence, and to let him see the "differ" between Catherine sober and really drunk, she threatened to go to the "Chace." "The brute, Tom," at one gave her the price of a pint to start with, and "what wid the vexation an' th' sorrow," she supposed she got unruly.'[6]

A meeting held in 1837 on National Education attended by Fr Thomas Cockshoot.

The *Coventry Herald* 3rd November 1837 told of a recent meeting held by the friends of National Education for the purpose of forming a society to co-operate with the Central Committee in London. The Catholic, Thomas Wyse, MP for Waterford City, attached to the Liberal party, the Coventry liberal-minded Charles Bray, and Father Cockshoot were present but the goodwill that appeared to be in the air was to be short-lived and not shared by all. In the meantime the *Coventry Standard* 10th November 1837 published a 'notice' that stated it was glad to see that subscriptions were being made to the Irish Election Petition Fund. It said:

> 'When it is recollected in what manner the Protestant electors were treated by the brutal supporters of the Popish O'Connell faction in Ireland, we should think no other stimulus would be wanting to induce our Protestant and Conservative brethren to subscribe their mite to obtain justice and protection of electoral rights for the members of the Protestant faith in Ireland.'

The *Coventry Standard* 24th November 1837 gave notice of a public meeting to be held on 30th November, by what might be called the Church of England Tory Party, with Lord Lifford in the chair, to adopt petitions against the legislature sanctioning any system of general education 'from which the Holy Scriptures, or any part of them, shall be excluded, as the basis of such education'. It would appear they were not satisfied with the outcome of the meeting held at the beginning of November. Directly underneath the notice was a list with 36 subscribers contributing amounts between £2. and 1s. to the Coventry Irish Election Petitions Fund. Rev. H.T. Powell, Stretton-on-

---

[5] In 1861 a 51 year old Michael Branam, occupation unspecified, was head of a household of 11, of whom 7 were lodgers in Warwick Lane.

[6] She was ordered to be committed to the House of Correction with hard labour for seven days. By 1870 Catherine would have appeared before the Court on numerous occasions on drunk and disorderly charges. Over the years references to an Irish background had vanished completely and she was simply depicted as an incorrigible drunkard who was hard-working when sober. The 1861census shows a Katherine Bird aged 27, from Co Carlow, was married to an older Thomas Bird aged 68, from Co Cavan at 93 Gosford Street. RG9/2201.78.28 EC 6. The Chase was a public house at 43 Gosford Street. Reference was made to the fact that her husband was a pensioner in a Court report in 1867.

Dunsmoor was among 4 Reverends and also included: 'A Conservative' (twice), 'An Operative Conservative', 'Justice to the Protestants of Ireland', 'Anti-O'Connell', and 'Against the Big Beggarman'. The meeting according to *Coventry Standard* on 1st December opened in a mannered way but descended into confusion which lasted for nearly an hour. It had been advertised as a public meeting, yet Lord Lifford thought of the meeting as private and did not want to discuss the resolutions but to adopt them at once. This annoyed those who felt they had come to hear open discussion, including the views of Mr Wyse who along with Mr Bray had turned up at the meeting. In the disarray Lord Lifford and much of the clerical party left and Charles Bray took over the chair, though some would say he commandeered it. This much abbreviated account is a necessary prerequisite to give context to what occurred at a point during the meeting that involved Father Cockshoot, who stayed till the end of the meeting. The Rev Mr. Powell (who had, as shown in Appendix 5, form on disliking the Catholic Church) addressed the meeting with a long analysis of the nature of religious instruction in schools, and what the position would be should it either include or exclude all beliefs of various religions. He said as Protestants they were distinguished from the Romanists, in that the Catholic Church insisted on its Scriptural interpretation being accepted without demur by its adherents.[7] Mr. Cockshoot said he 'must dissent from this' while the chairman said he could not permit Mr. Powell to be interrupted. What exact words were used around this time by Mr Cockshoot or the manner in which the exchange occurred is unclear but Mr. Cockshoot had to sit there while Powell continued with a long critical onslaught, dressed as a studied consideration; a passage illustrates:

> 'To what then shall we refer this new system of education…if it…had its origin with a Roman Catholic, he would be following up the policy of his Church. It has ever been the policy of Rome to foment the differences that unhappily exist among Protestants. Roman Catholics glory in describing Protestants as comprehending every variety of creed, but they always feel their weakness when the Protestant appeals to Scripture as the test of truth. How will they glory, then, if they can persuade us to fall into the snare, and set up for ourselves an authority at least as objectionable as that of the Roman Catholic Church, which shall decide what Scripture is useful, and what is not, what is to be retained and what is to be put aside. I call upon you as Protestants to remember that it was the grand principle of the Reformation, that the Bible, the Word of God, is the test of truth'.[8]

The *Coventry Standard* 8th December 1837 bitterly attacked Mr Wyse's motives and Mr Bray's conduct at the meeting. Rev. Cockshoot did not avoid the paper's censure.

> 'The assertion made by the Rev. Townsend Powell, as to Romanists considering the authority of their church to be superior to that of Scripture, was simply denied by the Rev. Mr Cockshoot. The *Herald* says he instantly refuted it. What an absurdity to call a denial a refutation, and particularly when every child who can read the History of England knows that the denial was incorrect – when every one knows that it is considered a crime for the laity of that church even to possess a copy of the Scriptures without permission from their priests –a crime which was punished in this City, when Romanists had the power, by death at the stake, or only escaped from, by flight and exile!'

---

[7] On his mention of Romanists he was interrupted – "not Romanist; Catholics or Roman Catholics".
[8] *Coventry Standard* 8th December 1837

Cockshoot placed a notice in the *Coventry Herald* 15th December 1837 replying to those who said Catholics had to accept his Church's scriptural interpretation without demur. His irritation is palpable. See Figure 4.5.

The anti-Catholic stance of the *Coventry Standard*.
A passage in the same tenor as the rest of the lengthy piece illustrates the invective which could be read by Coventrians in the *Standard* on 20th April 1838.

> 'The Romish priesthood carry their spiritual pretentions far higher than the clergy of any Protestant sect. They assume a power over the actions and opinions of their laity which is all but unbounded. There is not an act committed…there is no function of public or private life discharged by any one lay member of the Roman Catholic Community, which may not, and, should the priest so incline, which *is not* dragged within the iron rule of the confessional, and made the subject of inquiry, denunciation, penance, according to whatever form or measure of tyrannical persecution the caprice or the calculation of the moment, whether personal or political, on the part of the priest, may suggest to him as expedient. There never was on the face of this earth an impatience of all free agency in others so restless and tormenting as that exhibited by the Romish hierarchy towards those whom in derision they term their "flocks." There never was an intolerance of whatever deed, word, or thought, which had not its origin in their own injunctions or authority, so unrelenting as that which the Romish priests indulge and act upon, not merely from the chair of the confessional, but through official letters – through specific instructions – from the altar, at the fireside, in the sick chamber – at the wedding, the christening, the burial – throughout their whole intercourse with their several congregations, throughout their own demeanour, whether professional or social.'[9]

The liberal analysis of the *Coventry Herald*.
Coventry Herald 15th Sept 1837 Editorial:

> 'The old faction which from time to time tyrannized over Ireland, are supremely anxious about retaining that power which they have uniformly abused and exercised exclusively for the maintenance of an unjust and unnatural ascendancy of the few over the many…They would sack and pillage Ireland of the last pig and potatoe of its last wretched peasant, …rather than voluntarily yield to it an equality of civil and religious privileges in common with other portions of the United Kingdom. This…is the true disposition of the Tories towards Ireland…The Liberal would do justice if they could: but being unable, they regret it and pass on…The claims of Ireland, however, cannot be left thus; they will go on to be pressed more forcibly by her own children…the whole system of legislating for Ireland must be changed. Possessing all the natural advantages for creating national greatness and promoting the prosperity and freedom of its population, why is it that Ireland is not "great, glorious and free?" It may be answered, because the mass of the people are ignorant and superstitious, and the whole country torn by religious dissentions. But this is only half the answer to the question….The plain answer is, because the Government of England has uniformly been legislating for Ireland with a view to questions of religion, in order to maintain an unnatural Protestant ascendancy in a Catholic country…the blessings of education have been confined to the small but dominant sect for whose exclusive advantage Ireland has hitherto lived, moved, and had its being.

[9] *Coventry Standard* 20th April 1838. Original italics.

> …English Governments, taxing and goading seven-eights of the people under the force of law, for the benefit of the remaining unit, because that unit happens to hold a particular opinion in religion…But the Tories say that although the Protestants of Ireland are a minority, they comprise nineteen-twentieths of the rank, wealth, and intelligence of the country, and that therefore the Government ought still to be conducted with a view to the will of the this super-eminently enlightened portion of the Irish community, although they are a minority. We need no stronger argument than this of the Tories…to prove that Ireland has been shamefully misgoverned: for under a just system of Government, no such monstrous state of things could have been brought about…The oppressed and trodden-upon Irish nation has at length turned to demand a restitution of rights. The letter of Mr O'Connell …extracts…given in another part of our paper is highly important and deserving of attention'.

The editorial partisanship that faced contemporary readers is illustrated in the following contrasting passages referring to O'Connell's well-received visit to Coventry in 1844.

Dublin Weekly Register 23rd March 1844:

> 'The ancient city of Coventry was, on Monday, the scene of another of those generous outpourings of sympathy for Ireland, and disgust at the acts of her oppressors, which have lately done so much honour to England, and so nobly upheld that character of which Englishmen boast, for fair play and justice between man and man. The Liberator was received with the greatest enthusiasm by an immense meeting, presided over by the mayor of the city. Several of the most influential gentlemen of the county…'

Coventry Standard 22nd March 1844:

> 'The worthies who invited the "convicted conspirator" to come to Coventry last Monday, made a sad botch of their raree-show. They smuggled their man in, in a common car, along with a priest and minister, just as if he was coming to receive sentence here, instead of in Dublin… The sullen and unjoyous entrance into Coventry – the stormy reception at St. Mary's Hall – the un-ceremonious interrogations which reached his ears – must all have tended to give the Agitator…'

Appendix 9

Later Century Politics and Nationalism

Coventry was well informed on Irish affairs
The *Coventry Times* 24th September 1879 told that the MPs Parnell, O'Sullivan, Smyth and O'Cleary attended a large meeting in Tipperary which passed resolutions 'affirming allegiance to the principles of Irish independence' and sought 'an abatement of rent [and] the establishment of a peasant propriety'.

On 29th October 1879 it reported that C.S. Parnell MP attended a meeting at the Imperial Hotel in Dublin where Irish county delegates formed the Irish National Land League and elected him President.

Again on 26th November 1879 it reported on the arrest of the 'agitators' including Michael Davitt for making seditious speeches in Sligo.
The *Coventry Herald* 17th September 1880 reported a newer analysis of Ireland's misery and suggestions for its alleviation. This was a speech that it called 'violent' by Mr Redpath in Claremorris who in a charged delivery said his 'business in Ireland was to explain to Americans why the Irish people are so poor, although they are one of the most industrious, and frugal, and virtuous races on the face of the globe. 'I say the chief reason is because under the English monarchy, just as fast as the Irish toiler makes money he is robbed of it by the landlord, backed by British law'. He observed 'one class living in riotous luxury while the truly noblest – the class that work – go naked, and live in foul cabins, and sleep beneath dirty rags, and live on potatoes and Indian meal all the year round'. He advocated Home Rule, restoring the land to the tenants, social exclusion of landlords and a strike against rent while cautioning against any rash military revolt against the 'misrule' of the powerful and well-armed English.

The 1881 Election
The *Dublin Daily Express* 10th March 1881 reported there would be an election contest during the month necessitated by the appointment of Liberal Sir Henry Jackson as a judge.[1] The Irish electors who were said to be over 50 in number were to be asked by the Home Rule party to on 'no account' vote for the Liberal candidate Sir Ughtred Kay Shuttleworth. The other candidate who came forward was the Tory, Henry Eaton. According to the *Dublin Weekly Nation* 19th March 1881 the Whigs had not acted on their 1880 election promises to Ireland and had 're-imposed the coercion code in a more stringent form than was ever known before, and have defied and insulted Irish sentiment. They have, in short, become as Tory as the Tories themselves'.

The *Birmingham Daily Post* 10th March 1881 told of a meeting of Liberals in the Corn Exchange to promote the canditure of Sir Ughtred Kay Shuttleworth. Among those present was E.H. Delf and E. Petre. Shuttleworth reminded the meeting of Liberal achievements which included: the passing of the Reform bill and the recent widening of the franchise, Catholic emancipation, the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and commencement of reform of Irish Land Laws. The newspaper believed he would have the votes of the Irish Electors and the victuallers.

The *Coventry Herald* 11th March 1881 reported a meeting was held in West Orchard of Irish and Roman Catholic electors. Those present were Kay Shuttleworth, and several

[1] Henry Jackson actually died on 8th March 1881 before the election took place to fill the seat he vacated.

members of the Liberal Party. Also names recognised there were James Pinches, J.P. Beevor, R. Halpin, J. Rogers, A. Ryan, J. Ryan, M. Burke, D. Burke, C. Daly, and J. Deacon. Kay Shuttleworth spoke about the sympathetic legislation the Liberals had passed of benefit to Ireland in spite of Tory opposition. Job Deacon said as an Irishman he could not understand how any working man should vote for a Tory, much less an Irishman or Roman Catholic to whom the Tories were traditional enemies. And he hoped a resolution would be passed that the undivided vote be given to the Liberal candidate. James Pinches proposed a resolution pledging the meeting of Catholics to do all in its power to secure the return of Kay Shuttleworth as member for Coventry. J.P. Beevor seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

On Friday 11th March 1881 the *Dublin Daily Express* reported as follows that: the licensed victuallers held a meeting which came out strongly in favour of Mr Eaton; the Irish party in Coventry held a meeting and although no resolution emerged it was believed the majority will vote against the Liberal; Mr Finigan and A O'Connor came from London to speak against Sir UK Shuttleworth 'who is especially unacceptable, having voted for all the stringent clauses of the Peace Preservation Act 1870'. It stated there were 150 Irish voters in Coventry.[2] The *Dublin Daily Express* on 12th March 1881 reported that a crowded Corn Market meeting to hear Arthur O'Connor and J. Finigan was reduced to a noisy shambles with tables and chairs in the hall wrecked. The Home Rule MPs were unable to speak and had to be escorted out by the police. The blame was attributed for the disturbance to Birmingham men who were Radical extremists in the Liberal Party.

The *Dublin Daily Express* Saturday 12th March 1881 told that C.S. Parnell had issued an address to the Irish electors of Coventry. He had pointed out the Liberal candidate had now and in the past supported coercion. It was important that the the Whigs, who had imposed coercion, should not be supported even it it meant a gain for the Conservatives.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 19th March 1881 reported Eaton was returned with a large majority. He was informed 'by a deputation of Irish electors that out of a possible 198 votes, 194 had been cast in his favour'. Eaton told them that his victory was largely attributable to the unanimous support the Irish had provided. The paper saw the Irish voters of Coventry as punishing an advocate of repression. *The Irishman* of the same date remarked there are very few constituencies in England in which…a hundred votes will not turn the balance of the parties… The Irish, in fact are everywhere. Up to a few days ago, the Irish leaders never even thought of Coventry; and behold, we have turned the election by our countrymen'.

Not everyone was happy with this ploy. Francis Shepherd, from Co. Down wrote to the *Freeman's Journal* 17th March 1881 stating the 'whole traditions and ideas of Toryism, past and present, have been to keep the farmers in a state of serfdom. No concession, no toleration, no privileges of any kind has always been the Tory motto'. He said they were now invited by Parnell 'to have faith in the chimera of Tory land reform'. He believed that the Land League would 'be an instrument that would emancipate us from the Tory Vampire' but 'judging from the proceedings at Coventry' it was on them that farmers were to be forced to rely for a good Land Bill.

<u>The 1887 Election</u>

The *Birmingham Daily Post* 1st July 1887 recorded Arthur O'Connor MP spoke in favour of Mr Ballantine candidacy at an open air meeting and mentioned the Irish

[2] Arthur O'Connor, Queens County MP; James Lysaght Finigan, Clare MP.

question as issue of the moment. However his resentment for the House of Lords could be seen in his clever attack on W.H. Eaton, who had been elevated to the Lords. His speech showed he was attuned to the instincts of Coventrians and to what would attract their votes. Before any mention of the Irish question he mocked W.H. Eaton's speaking record by saying: 'He had never heard him speak…if anyone had asked him a week ago who was the member for Coventry he could not have told them. They might just as well never have had a member. Mr Eaton might just as well have sent his hat'. The report continued: 'The biggest fool in Christendom, when his father died he had a right to succeed him. That accounted for the character of a good many of the members of that House. He asked them whether they wanted the town to be represented on the principles of the House of Lords. Their late member had received the reward of his eloquence, his intelligence and his assiduity. He had voted, he (the speaker) supposed, when he chose to stop up long enough, like anyone of the dumb-driven cattle of the Tory party, according to the pre-direction of the whips, and now being a rich man, he had gone to the House of Lords. The mere animal succession was good enough for the House of Lords; it remained to be seen whether it was good enough for the people of Coventry.'

The *Dublin Daily Express* 29th June 1887 set out in simple terms the choice between Colonel Eaton and Ballantine. It reported the former in his electoral address, when referring to the Irish question, said 'he should always be on the side of law and order - remedial measures and union on the one hand, against anarchy, disorder, and separation on the other'. It said Eaton appealed to the local Liberal Unionists to support the Unionists. Ballantine, it told, was a supporter of Gladstone's Home Rule endeavours, which according to him was the only policy that would lead to the pacification of Ireland.

The *Birmingham Daily Post* 4th July 1887 reported on a hustings for Ballintine near Swanswell Pool. Alderman Hill on the platform noted that some of their friends had become not dissenting Liberals but consenting Tories. To applause, he told the large meeting 'it was said that Mr Ballintine was supported by the rag, tag and bobtail, and with Irish dynamiters. But the rag, tag, and bobtail could put their crosses on the ballot papers - and if the English people would only trust the Irish people they would very soon hear no more of the dynamiters'. There was an appeal from Hill to the artisans of Coventry to show that Englishmen could be just towards Ireland, but no appeal directly to any Irish that might be in the crowd. On 5th July the same newspaper reported on a second meeting in front of the Reform Club where trust was again promoted as an important concern. A councillor Read said the Irish had three courses open to them 'to fight as Lord Randolph Churchill had advised Ulster to do, which was rebellion, to form themselves into secret societies, or to place their dependence on English people. He urged the electors of Coventry to allow the Irish to trust them.'

The *Dublin Daily Express* 5th July 1887 said the number of Irish voters was about 300. At a private meeting in the Corn Exchange with Alderman Gulson in the chair, the Rev. F.M. Beaumont Vicar of Holy Trinity proposed the setting up of a branch of the Liberal Unionists, which was carried and a provisional committee was formed. The meeting heard a telegram had been received from Lord Hartington and a letter from Mr. Chamberlain expressing satisfaction at the proposed creation of the branch.[3]

In the election, Eaton received 4,213 votes and Ballantine 4,229, giving the latter by sixteen votes a close victory. The report on the election was carried in the *Birmingham Daily Post* 11th July 1887. Sweeney from Manchester, the organiser of the Irish National

[3] *Coventry Herald* 8th July 1887

league spoke to the jubilant gathering in the Queen's Hotel and thanked the Coventry electors for what the people of England would see as the first blow struck against coercion and for the local self-government of Irish people. The Irish party held a meeting presided over by James Duffy who said 'the people of Coventry would gain the thanks of the Irish people and the Irish of Coventry would gain the gratitude of the Irish nation at home and abroad'. Eaton in his speech was unable to explain his defeat other than not receiving the support of the Liberal Unionists. However other factors were attendant. He was seen as a Tory reactionary by some, less open to compromise on aspects of the Irish question by others, while some questioned if an army colonel should represent the city, or indeed as such, would he have sufficient time to devote to the constituency. There were also those that did not like Coventry becoming the preserve of the Eatons.

It was an election held in Coventry that was concerned with the overall governance of Ireland while in Ireland itself matters remained local and troubled. Adjacent to the two columns of the election report was a column containing news on the state of Ireland. This reported on the excitement during evictions at Coolgraney, of tenants houses barricaded in anticipation of eviction on the Kingston estate, Co. Cork, and the view that the evictions by Cork landlords was occurring under cover of the Coercion Bill.

The *Weekly Freeman's Journal* 16th July 1887 published a circular forwarded to all branches of the Irish National League of Great Britain which stated 'The passing of the Coercion Bill imposes on the Irish of Great Britain the duty of paying greater attention than ever to the development and organisation of their voting strength. The results of the elections in Liverpool, Burnley, Ilkeston, Spalding, North Paddington, and Coventry show plainly the importance of our prosecuting the work of organisation and registration with even greater vigour than hitherto.'

The 1892 Election

T.P. O'Connor visited Coventry in support of Ballantine and noted that the election was being held in July when many working men would have changed from the place of residence noted on the register.[4]

The *Midland Daily Telegraph* 25th June 1892 reported that a Unionist meeting was held at the Corn exchange chaired by Alderman Gulson to support their candidate Charles Murray. Joseph Chamberlain gave a lengthy speech concerning Ireland which was initially interrupted by protesters. The long speeches at these two meetings reveal the depth of nuance - and passionate bluster - that was used to justify their policies. E. Petre and Dr McVeagh were Catholic names recognised in the list of attendees at the latter meeting. Edward Petre exhorted his co-religionists to support Murray. This prompted a letter to the same edition of the *Telegraph* signed by 'A Catholic'. The letter, reproduced below gives a flavour of local contestation and showed that Chamberlain was prepared to lay the blame for him not supporting Irish self-rule, on what he saw as the manipulation of Irish priests. Edward Petre did not explain how there was room for contradiction in his family's close engagement with the Coventry clergy, and his appeal for support for Murray who was also supported by those who viewed Irish Catholic clergy with such distaste.

> Fellow Catholics,- I see on reading the newspapers that Mr Petre, of Whitley Abbey, has been exhorting his co-religionists to vote at the forthcoming election for Mr Murray, the Unionist candidate. How he or any Catholic could sit and listen to such calumny and slander as was put forth by Mr. Chamberlain at the Unionist meeting last week, I am at a loss to conceive, much less can I understand

[4] *Worcestershire Chronicle* 25th June 1892

his requesting them to vote for such men. Mr Chamberlain is reported to have said:- " I appeal to you, I appeal to the Dissenters amongst you not to desert your fellow Nonconformists in Ireland, not to place them under the ascendancy of the Irish priests - priests who have abused their high office by denouncing at the altar the men who were politically opposed to them, using the spiritual terrors of their Church in order to secure compliance with their views, and persuading thousands and tens of thousands of Irishmen to declare themselves to be illiterate in order that the priests, acting as personation agents in the booths, might see how they voted," I ask my fellow-Catholics, can you vote for men who will revile your priests in such a manner, or will you not rather support the party who gave you representation in Parliament, have always advocated reform, and have given you whatever liberty you possess. Vote for Ballantine and show this aristocratic Catholic that you are not to be blinded by his example. A Catholic.

Some references to the Liberal Association in Coventry that involved Ireland

The *Birmingham Daily Post* 24th March 1892 told of the Coventry Women's Liberal Association annual public meeting. This was addressed by Mr J.G. Swift MacNeill, MP for Donegal. While certain there would be a parliament in Dublin, he derided talk of separation, or that there would be a standing army in Ireland. He further derided the possibility of the Protestant minority in Ireland suffering persecution in any new arrangement. Throughout, he ridiculed Arthur Balfour who he said possessed 'a wonderful genius for blundering, fumbling and wasting public time'.

The *Coventry Times* 13th February 1889 reported on the Coventry Liberal Association protesting at the imprisonment of W. O'Brien MP. The President of the Association and Chairman of the meeting was Joseph Cash; a snippet of whose comments epitomise the indignent tone of the meeting: 'The object of the meeting was to protest against the inhuman treatment of their fellow-countryman, Mr O'Brien and of others who were suffering with him. The government was treating these men worse than barbarians would treat them, worse than any man would treat his dog.'

The Land League and the National League

This list is believed to comprise all reported meetings of the League. Some of the prominent participants at meetings are referenced in Appendix 2.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 26th March 1881 stated a meeting was held in the 'Ring of Bells' Yardley Street. Frank Byrne, secretary to the Home Rule Confederation who was present urged Irish residents of Coventry to organise and unite in order to be effective at parliamentary, municipal and school board elections. An Irish Registration Association and a branch of the Land League were formed. Thirty five members joined and the following evening twenty five were enrolled. The officers were: - President, Mr John O'Donnell; vice-president, Mr P Hogan; treasurer, Mr T Hennessy; secretary, Mr P J McDonnell; assistant secretary, Mr T Ryan. Committee – Messrs, J Duffy, W Burns, J Campion, J McGauley, Burke, Donnelly, and Beckitt. The background of some of those mentioned is revealed in the 1881 census:

Thomas Ryan: 47y, Labourer at gas works, Ireland – his wife Mary was Irish-born RG11/3075.12.16 ED 25
William Burns: 42y, General labourer, Coventry – his wife Jane was Irish-born RG11/3924.32.19 ED 2
John Campion: 36y, Iron moulder, Sheffield RG11/3071.40.15 ED 3
John McGauley: 40y, Iron fitter, South of Ireland RG11/3074.46.3.ED 22

John Burke: 40y, Labourer, Ireland RG11/2452.46.27 ED 2
William Beckitt: 52y, Cordwainer, Dublin RG11/3074.83.3 ED 24

The *Herald* on 6th January 1881 stated the no rent conspiracy is active in many Irish districts. It opined:
'The instruments of Parnell's policy have made payment of rent a capital offence and the midnight executioner visits it with the punishment of death. It would, we fear, be idle to pretend that the followers of Mr Parnell and his fellow suspects are not the majority among large classes of the Irish.' Lord Leigh, the Lord Lieutenant for Warwickshire wrote a letter published in the *Herald* of 13th January 1881 seeking subscriptions to the National Fund for the Defence of Property in Ireland.

> 'I may remind you that the Property Defence Association is formed principally to resist the action of the Land League, who prevent the recovery of rents by a combination on the part of the peasantry not to bid at Sheriffs' sales of Farm Produce, &c,; and to assist those placed in a helpless condition by being "Boycotted".

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 9th April 1881 under a heading 'The Land League in Great Britain' reported:
'A meeting of the members of this branch was held on Monday evening, the president (Mr. J. O'Donnell) in the chair. There was a good attendance, including Mr. P. McDonnell, hon. Sec., and Mr. J. Hennessy, treasurer. Local rules for the management of the society were submitted and approved, and several new members enrolled'.[5]

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 23rd April 1881 told of a deputation from the Coventry branch of the Land League, consisting of J. O'Donnell president, P. McDonnell secretary, T. Hennessey treasurer and W Ryan assistant secretary, meeting Parnell and T.P. O'Connor in Birmingham on 8th April. On behalf of 'Coventry Irishmen' they thanked Parnell for his stand in the House of Commons against voting away the liberties of the Irish.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 11th February 1882 reported that according to James Duffy, secretary, members of the Land League held their monthly meeting at the J. Killen's Wagon and Horses, Well Street which was chaired by J. O'Donnell its president. Subscriptions amounting to £2. 10s were given towards the Prisoners Sustentation Fund. In Appendix 2 the background of James Duffy, John Killen and J. O'Donnell are explored.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 23rd April 1881 stated: 'The weekly meeting of the members of this branch was held on Monday evening at the Ring of Bells, Yardley Street, Hill Fields, the president, J. O'Donnell, in the chair. There was a good attendance - including P. McDonnell, secretary; T. Hennseesy, treasurer; W. Hogan, vice-president; and W. Ryan, assistant secretary. After the transaction of ordinary business, and the election of several new members, the evening was devoted to music and singing, Mr. Callaghan being again in attendance, and rendering several national airs on the Irish pipes in such a manner as to elicit loud applause.' A labourer, John Callaghan who was born in Coventry was sentenced to 7 days imprisonment in Wakefield, Yorkshire for begging in June 1913.

[5] J. Hennessey was a misprint, with T. Hennessey being the person referred to.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 1st April 1882 told of the first annual meeting when officers for the ensuing year were elected. John O'Donnell, president; W. Hogan vice-president; James Duffy, secretary; J.P. Walsh assistant secretary, John Killen treasurer. Committee members, J. Campion, J. Doran, T. Killen, M. Burke, J. Burke, J. Sheehan, E. Lamb, J. Cotter, P. McDonnell.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 20th May 1882 told of a meeting on Sunday the 14th with J. O'Donnell in the chair and James Duffy as secretary, that denounced recent murders and condemned what it termed the outrage of the R.I.C. at Ballina.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 27th October 1883 reported a meeting was held at the Wagon and Horses Inn, Well Street, on the previous Sunday. Subscriptions were received towards the Parnell Testimonial Fund. Appointed for the ensuing half year were: President, J. O'Donnell; vice-president, Mr. P. McDonnell; secretary J. Duffy; assistant secretary, W. Mattocks; treasurer, J. Killeen. A resolution was unanimously carried pledging the members to do all in their power to win back for Ireland national self-government.

The *Birmingham Daily Post* 18th October 1883 reported that they resolved to assist Parnell, and 'gain the sympathy of all liberty-loving Englishmen, in hurling from power a despotic and unrelenting combination of Whigs and landgrabbers'.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 10th May 1884 mentioned the executive of the National League of Great Britain had in its report, Mr. McSweeney's finding that the work of registration was satisfactorily progressing in Coventry.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 18th July 1885 contained a letter to its editor from P. McDonnell, 10 Vine Street, Coventry. The rare evidence expressed directly in this most valuable letter is important in informing and verifying conclusions drawn about the 1880s landscape. His letter must have caused a stir as the *Dublin Weekly Nation* 8th August 1885 told of a meeting of Irishmen, attended by Henry Park the Irish National League organiser, where it was decided to reopen the branch. Officers appointed for six months were: J. O'Donnel, president; P. McDonald, vice-president; J. Duffy, secretary; treasurer T. Hennessy.

P. McDonnell provided an assessment of the state of the branch, what influenced the local Irish and the distance kept from it by the clergy.
In part he wrote:

> 'There is a branch of the National League here, but only in name. I should think it is over twelve months since a meeting was held. Patriotism lies dormant. If a general election were to take place to-morrow we would fall between two stools simply through the lukewarmness and lethargy exhibited by those who should be up and doing. Yet we can claim to have established the first or second branch of the Land League in England, and to have done good work at the last election by placing Mr. Parnell's nominee at the head of the poll, for which we were publicly thanked by the Irish leader. We were also able by a united effort to send close on ninety pounds towards the Irish Distress Funds, besides smaller sums for other public purposes. So you see, Mr Editor, there is good material here; but it wants working up. I think where the mischief lies is in so many of our countrymen in Coventry reading the scurrilous rags of this country in preference to the moral and patriotic Irish newspapers, which can be had here by simply ordering them from

> any news agent. Also we are short of the sympathy of our local clergy, though we can boast of having two *soggarths aroon* amongst us who, you would think, would endeavour to help the cause of Irish nationalism in the same way as the venerated Canon Monahan of the Nottingham branch. If we had a visit from that silver-tongued orator, T. Sexton, or T.P. O'Connor, or any of the Irish veterans, what an amount of good would be done here in bringing back those wandering Irishmen to a sense of their duty to fatherland!'[6]

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 22nd August 1885 reported there was agreement at a meeting to a proposal by M. Timothy, seconded by T. Burke to invite D. Daly of Birmingham to address the Irishmen of Coventry.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 29th August 1885 reported O'Donnell chaired a meeting with Duffy as secretary that was attended by Regan, Hennessey, McDonnel, Blennerhasset, and Niland where an animated discussion took place on forming a national club.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 5th September 1885 disclosed several new members had enrolled at a meeting, while John Conlon appealed to all Irishmen in Coventry to join the branch.

A meeting held almost a fortnight before 26th September 1885, chaired by J. O'Donnell with Duffy as secretary, made arrangements for the Dominick Daly, barrister-at-law to deliver an address on 26th September.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 12th December 1885 informed that D. Daly who was in the chair, praised the Irish electors of Coventry for obeying Parnell. Duffy proposed, which was seconded by Ryan, that the meeting would pledge to follow Parnell's instructions. Deasy MP and Park also addressed the meeting.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 13th February 1886 reported the half-yearly branch meeting was held in the Pheasant Inn, Well Street, which was chaired by the vice-president P. McDonnell and J. Duffy as secretary. Carried unanimously was the motion that the expulsion of the president be published in the national press. What exactly caused the expulsion of, presumably J. O'Donnell, is not recorded, but the *Shields Daily Gazette* on 5th December 1885 reported as follows: 'A number of Irishmen in Hull have been expelled from one of the local branches of the National League owing to their…disregarding the manifesto of Mr Parnell as to the manner in which the Irish should vote…The Kensington (London) Branch…passed a resolution severely condemning the conduct of Mr Michael Davitt in telegraphing to constituencies in England and Scotland to influence the Irish vote in favour of Radicals and Liberals, whom they consider are enemies and persecutors of Ireland, in opposition to Mr Parnell's manifest, this action carrying a stamp of disunion among the Irish Party.' John O'Donnell must have been unable to stomach Parnell's advice to support the Conservatives.

---

[6] John Denvir referred to a 'soggarth aroon' in his book *Life Story of an Old Rebel*, (Dublin 1910) when he wrote in Chapter XIII: The Chairman at the public demonstration at night was Father Sherlock, one of the finest specimens of the good old "soggarth aroon" type it has ever been my privilege to meet. Several years afterwards, when I was organiser for the League in the Birmingham district, I was right glad to have the opportunity of renewing my acquaintance with him. Ebook.
http://www.gutenberg.org/files/16559/16559.txt.
John Herson refers to Canon O'Sullivan, the first Irish priest in Stafford as a 'Soggart Aroon' or 'beloved priest'.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 16th October 1886 recorded that a special meeting had been held to hear John Denvir in his speech exhort Irishmen to maintain their organisation. It was noted that the next meeting on November 8th would hear James Duffy read from the 'Story of Ireland' by AM Sullivan.

The *Dublin Weekly Nation* 16th April 1887 reported that Coventry branch of the Irish National League had with P. McDonnell president in the chair, and James Duffy as secretary resolved: 'That we, the Irishmen of Coventry, indigently protest against the unnecessary and cowardly Coercion Bill which the Government in their savage hate for the Irish are directing against the leaders of the people who have the courage to stand up in defence of the national aspirations of the Irish race.' The strength of feeling in the resolution and the presumption to speak for 'the Irishmen of Coventry' shows that for some a sense of being Irish meant so much more than being born in Ireland. Their 'Irishness' centred on seeing England as having detested Ireland for pursuing a nationalist agenda.

On 22nd April 1887 the *Coventry Herald* told that an open air demonstration against the Irish Coercion Bill was attended by more than one thousand when held in Pool Meadow under the auspices of the Liberal Association. Its president Joseph Cash was in the chair, and attendees listed were MPs, Reverends, Councillors and local notables. Father McCabe, Father Rea, T. Hennessey, J. Duffey, P. McDonnell and W. McGowran were present. A number of passionate speakers condemned the 'Salisbury and Chamberlain coercionists' in whose hands 'things were advancing from bad to worse'.

The *Leamington Spa Courier* 9th July 1887 reported that a meeting of Irishmen was held in a hotel in Little Park Street, in order to re-organise the Coventry branch of Irish National League. John Denver, who was Midland organiser for the League was in the chair and J.T. Sweeney another organiser was present. While no resolutions were proposed as it was not an election meeting (though it was in all but name), the desire to register Irish voters, who would combine for the purpose of promoting Irish interests, and provide Mr Gladstone with a majority at the next election was none the less understood. Attendees were not told to back Ballantine but coyly asked to carefully reflect on who they thought was the truest friend of Ireland in making a decision on who to vote for.

The *Coventry Herald* 21st September 1888 reported the annual meeting of the Branch was held in the George Hotel, Little Park Street. James Doherty was chosen as a delegate to represent the Branch later in the month at the annual convention of the League in Birmingham. Thomas H. Flynn a League organiser attended and said he was told there were upwards of 200 Irishmen in Coventry, and yet he regretted to say that on the League's books it could not count one-seventeenth of the members it ought to count. In noting Coventry had so few members he said 'No Irishman could be a true friend of his country or could claim to be a descendant of those ancestors who had shed their blood in their country's cause [if they had not joined the League]'. The officers appointed for the following six months were President, Charles Murray; vice-president, Michael Burke; treasurer W. Hogan; secretary James Duffy; committee W. Burns, D. Cowan, T. Murphy, J. Brislin, J, Doherty, L, Flannaghan, and J. Larvin.

The *Coventry Standard* 15th February 1889 stated that at the monthly meeting of the League with Mr Charles Murray in the chair, a resolution was passed condemning in strong terms, "the inhuman policy of the present Government towards Ireland, and Balfour's brutal conduct towards W. O'Brien and his fellow patriots."

The *Coventry Times* 14th August 1889 stated a meeting was held in the George Hotel, Little Park Street. John Denvir, general organiser of the Irish National League addressed the meeting and impressed on it the necessity of registering Irish voters. Michael Burke was in the chair and J. Duffy was secretary. Others present were P. Niland, L. Flanagan, J. Killen, J. Payne, J. Brislin, T. Conroy, T. Burke, J. Callaghan and Evos Kelly.
There are two men named Michael Burke either of whom could have been in the chair:
(1) Born in Coventry in 1856 to Irish-born labourer James, and Galway-born laundress Jane Burke. The family with Jane as widowed head had moved to Birmingham by 1871. Michael had moved back to Coventry with his own wife and family by 1891 where he worked as a cycle brazier[7]
(2) Born in Coventry in 1849 to Mayo-born labourer Peter Burke and Mayo-born Bridget. In 1891 he was a watchmaker finisher. See Table 3.2.[8]

The *Coventry Herald* 29th August 1890 told of the Irish National League holding a public meeting to hear an address from Joseph Nolan MP for North Louth 'on the duty of Irishmen in the coming struggle [general election]'. It said 'owing to the hurried manner in which the meeting was called [due to Westminster commitments of Nolan] there was not a very large attendance'. W. Hogan President of the local branch was on the platform with T. Burke. Others present included J. Doherty secretary, P. Lyon, W. Costello, F. Daly, T. Hennessey, W. Doran, and M. Burke. Nolan in his address lashed Tory coercion and what he saw as their failure to bring benefit to the people through their gross mismanagement. In the cause of Home Rule he urged that every Irishman should be on the voting register and all Irishmen should 'form part and parcel of the great organisation which was fighting the battle of Ireland - the Irish National League.

Irish Social and Literary Society

The *Coventry Herald* 25th January 1901 told of the newly founded Irish Social and Literary Society having their inaugural meeting in a room decorated in Irish colours in St. Osburg's Schools. The committee wore sprigs of Shamrock. There were songs and recitation by the Misses McGowran, J.E. McGowran, and others. The vote of thanks to these was supported by Rev. Father Campbell who hoped that the next meeting would see a doubling of the existing large membership. 'God Save Ireland' was sung at the end of the evening, as it would be at future meetings. The *Coventry Herald* 22nd March 1901 reported that St. Patrick's Day 'did not receive very wide recognition in Coventry… The immortal shamrock had a few admirers but it was not generally worn'. The Irish Social and Literary Society organised the usual concert in a room with the usual Irish motifs. Messrs W.J. McGowran, J.E. McGowran and Miss McGowran were among the vocalists of a series of Irish ballads which ended with 'God Save Ireland'. On 24 May 1901 the *Coventry Herald* reported the Irish Social and Literary Society held their monthly meeting in St. Osburg's Schools presided over by Rev. Father Campbell. W.J. and Miss McGowran were among the balladeers who at the end of the evening sang 'God Save Ireland'. On 7th February 1902 the *Coventry Herald* noted The Irish Social and Literary Society held a Cinderella dance in the Assembly Rooms, Union Street. J.E. McGowran was present and it was stated that the committee intend as soon as practicable to introduce real Irish dancing and music into the city.[9] The *Coventry Herald* 21st March 1902 reported that 'St Patrick's Day was little observed in Coventry. Shamrock was on sale at a few shops, but there was not much demand for the sprays; well-known Irishmen wore them in their coats'. The usual celebration was

[7] RG9/2207.30.7 ED 10; RG10/3107.18.31 ED 24; RG12/2381.34.7 ED 7
[8] HO107/2067.326.21 ED 16; RG12/2450.7A.9 ED 17
[9] A dance that ends at midnight.

organised by the Society in St. Osburg's Schools. 'The walls were draped in Green, and the Irish flag displayed thereon, and mottoes in Erse such as "Ceud mile failte", "Slainte go Eirinn", and "Eirinn go braugh". J.E McGowran and Dr McVeagh were among the entertainers many of whom wore green rosettes or shamrock. The entertainment concluded with 'God Save Ireland'. On 16th May 1902 the Social and Literary Society Society visited Dunchurch, and there met visitors from Birmingham and Rugby. A concert was held where there was singing and recitation in Gaelic.[10] In October 1902 a social evening was held by what the *Coventry Herald* described as 'The Irish Social and Literary Society Branch of the Gallic League'. The items of entertainment included a song in Gaelic which was the result of weekly language classes now being held in St. Osburg's Schools. As expected 'God Save Ireland' concluded the evening.[11] The *Coventry Herald* 20th March 1903 said the St Patrick's Day concert had moved to the more commodious premises of Baths Assembly Hall. There was much green and Irish themed paraphernalia on display and the usual variety of Irish songs and dances. Dr McVeagh was indisposed.

[10] *Coventry Herald* 16th May 1902
[11] Ibid. 17th October 1902

Appendix 10

Anti-Catholic ferment on national issues in Coventry

Norman points out that generally there was an *ad hoc* aspect to anti-Catholic agitation with most committees coming to life and remaining active for a limited time in outraged response to an issue, either of concessions to Catholic, or to one related to Catholic expansionism.[1] This periodic ebullition could be seen in Coventry. During the struggle for emancipation Coventry Catholics were left in no doubt about what local Protestants thought of the Church's principles and patriotism. On 26th June 1827 the Archdeacon and Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Coventry sent an Address to the King, George IV, implored him not to grant further concessions to members of the Roman Catholic Church, as 'her tenets are inimical to the existing mild ascendancy of our Church, and subversive of civil and religious liberty'.[2]

Parliament met on 5th February 1829 to hear the King's speech stating the laws on civil disabilities against Catholics would be reviewed.[3] On the 27th February 1829 the *Herald* reported that the County Hall in which a public meeting was to be held to consider the propriety of presenting petitions to Parliament relating to emancipation was

---

[1] Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England*, p. 20

[2] *Coventry Herald* 27th July 1827. The Archdeaconry of Coventry stretched beyond Coventry and encompassed north and east Warwickshire.

[3] On 6th February 1829 O'Connell left Dublin for London. On Monday 9th his carriage reached Birmingham where the *Birmingham Journal* 14th February 1829 snidely reported:

> 'A great many of the lower class of Irish artisans thronged the street opposite the Hotel, and endeavoured to cheer their countrymen, but with very little success, for except their "own sweet" voices," all was silence. As the carriage containing the precious freight of Catholicity, moved along New-street, its occupants were indulged with a very general loud series of hissings, which increased as it sped along High Street to the London-Road, in the direction of NEWGATE (sic). All of the party *were armed with pistols*, which they displayed, as if for the purpose of intimidation. Judging from their looks, we would rather not meet such a banditti looking crew on a lonely road!'

It continued:

> 'in many places, particularly at Coventry a spirit of resistance was quite manifest; among the persons who surrounded the carriage, several were guilty of such misconduct, that Mr O'Connell's party felt it necessary to show that they were prepared to reply to any assault made upon them in the most formidable manner possible. – namely, the firing upon their assailants'.

The mocking style of the *Journal* indicates the visceral hostility that abounded. Directly underneath the report was the following provocation:

> 'ROMAN CATHOLIC VIEWS – We submit the following observations of a Roman Catholic priest as to the views which that body entertain towards the Church of England – "To whom" said he "did your cathedrals and churches originally belong, ere they were taken possession of by your clergy? The Roman Catholics surely: and until those churches are agin (sic) restored to us, we will not rest satisfied," this is the language of the priests in the Midland district, which they are prompted to utter unhesitatingly, by the present conduct of the government of the country'. (*Birmingham Journal* 14th February 1829.

The *Journal* was a Tory supporting newspaper until 1832. The following brief extract from the editorial of the same issue displays the bond seen to exist between the Church and State, and the unrelenting resentment felt by many Protestants towards Catholic relief which was seen as a dangerous concession.

> 'We sincerely trust that the measure – fraught as it is with evil to Church and State – will be rejected… We trust that there is PRINCIPLE enough in the land to strangle it ere it comes to strength; we trust that our Protestant Constitution, and our Protestant privileges, obtained by the toils and the martyrdom of our forefathers, may be preserved…unpolluted by the too dangerous inoculation of Roman Catholic principles. LORD ELDON has said that … "if Roman Catholics were once permitted to take their seats in either house of parliament, or to legislate for the state; or if to them were granted the privilege of possessing the great executive offices of the Constitution, from that day and from that moment the Sun of Great Britain would set." (Capital lettering as per original).

surrounded by a No-Popery crowd. Rev Sibree, Independent Chapel, and the noted Quaker, Mr Cash, on attempting to enter the hall were beaten on the head and had to seek refuge. The abusive crowd inside would not permit the subject to be discussed and the meeting was dissolved. The *Herald* editorialised in that edition in favour of religious liberty and condemned what it said were the intoxicated 'ruffians' who disrupted the meeting. There was also a handbill circulating at the time supporting Catholic relief which was signed by 'two clergymen, three Dissenting Ministers and a great proportion of the most respectable inhabitants of this City'. The *Herald* 6th March 1929 reported on the attitude of Coventry's MPs. Thomas Fyler voted against on the basis that the majority of 3,015 signatures were written on the petition against whilst only 905 signatures were on the petition in favour. Richard Heathcote voted in favour saying he believed in conscience it was best for the country, but more so he felt the petitioners had, in being asked in such a way to choose between Popery or No Popery, they thought they were voting against Popery itself and not against a relief of civil disabilities.

In May 1842 Mr Williams presented a petition to House of Commons on behalf of the Roman Catholics of Coventry who wished relief from 'certain grievances to which they were subjected'. The wording of the petition could not be located.[4]

Feelings could lie dormant for years only to reawaken at the same temperature, as they did in relation to the Maynooth Endowment bill. The clergy of the Archdeaconry of Coventry convened at the King's Head, Coventry on 16th April 1845.[5] Following a number of strong speeches, especially by Birmingham clerics, that revealed bitterness towards the Catholic Church and a desire to reject any endowment of Romanism, a resolution was passed to petition Parliament against the bill. The crisis blew over but the meeting did disclose the deep antipathy of the clerics. The Rev John Howells, vicar of Holy Trinity, Coventry in the course of his address which evoked cheers of approval, said he held any concession to Roman Catholics to be evil and he well knew that great numbers of those who had sanctioned the act of 1829 had rued the day they ever did so. He ascribed the evils that Ireland endured to Popish influence.

As in June 1827 and 1845 the clergy of the Archdeaconry of Coventry were ready to complain in 1850 during the restoration of the Hierarchy. Following Ullathorne's consecration as Bishop of Birmingham on 26th October, a letter in the *Standard* 1st November 1850 signed by 76 clerics about 'the intrusion' into their diocese of a 'Romish Bishop of Birmingham'; which 'aggression upon their Church and constitution' they saw as a crisis. Much of the rest of the page had pieces attacking Catholicism.[6] Finally, found printed on the same page was the following piece, illustrating a rare occasion when a 'national issue' was seen tied to the local church. The piece came close, as no other article ever did in Coventry, to sneering at the local Catholic clergy who were involved in what it described as an 'exhibition'. It said:

> 'For the last few evenings the neighbourhoods of High-street and Union-Street in the Borough have been in continual excitement owing to the extraordinary

---

[4] *Warder and Dublin Weekly Mail* 28th May 1842

[5] *Coventry Standard* 25th April 1845

[6] There was from Henry Townsend Powell (Appendix 5), a letter addressed, as was his wont to 'My dear Roman Catholic Parishioners' in which he ridiculed as delusional the Catholic Church's claim that it had the power to work miracles. There was an extensive piece by the *Standard* itself - the opening line of which would suffice to indicate the tone and content. It stated 'The Papal plot for the subjugation of our national independence continues to thicken'. However, deeper in the article a further sentence compels quotation. In order to show its vitriol towards Newman it stated: Another Romanist Priest was on Sunday *enthroned* as Bishop of Birmingham, when a notorious apostate preached on the occasion, and blasphemously observed that "the grave was opened and Christ was coming out." Original italics; Gerald Parsons, *Religion in Victorian Britain: Traditions* (Manchester 1988) p. 148 mentions that 'Newman preached a sermon which seemed, in the highly-charged air, to celebrate the restoration of the English *people* to the Roman Church'. Parson's italics.

> conduct of some Roman Catholic priests and their assistants, which has naturally caused the gathering together of all the refuse of the low courts and alleys with which this neighbourhood abounds. On each evening during the week the windows of the respective occupants of the different rooms have been illuminated with candles, and a priest standing on a chair, dressed in canonicals, and having a crucifix held behind him so as to give the interior of the court as nearly as possible the appearance of a Roman Catholic chapel during mass, has held forth to the surrounding multitudes on the doctrines and progress now said to be making in England of the Roman Catholic religion. The discourse has principally referred to the late assumption of spiritual power in this country by the heads of the Roman Catholic Church, deductions being drawn therefrom that the established religion of this realm will be shortly overthrown, and the Roman Catholic religion assume its place. The crowds gathered not only in the court, but in the streets at either end, have caused serious obstructions to the neighbourhood, and it is somewhat astonishing that the police have not interfered to put an end to these exhibitions.'

It is to be noticed the writer did not mention the Irish in his reference to the refuse of the low courts, and that the police wisely kept at a distance thereby avoiding the creation of antagonism in Coventry between them and the locals. The happening was not recorded in any other paper even though it had been said that excited crowds caused serious local obstruction.

Over 300 clerics of the Archdeaconry of Coventry attended a meeting reported on 8th November 1850 in the King's Head, Coventry, that had been called for by the 76 signatories mentioned earlier. The anger, hysteria and insult in the words directed at Pio Nono, Wiseman and Ullathorne was palpable.[7]

A reference in the *Coventry Standard* 13th December 1850 provides an indication of feeling at street-level in Coventry. It shows how 'preaching' could quickly arouse the hostility of a crowd, and the presence of 'excitement' which the restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy induced. The anti-Catholic attitude of the *Coventry Standard* can be seen in the satirical style of the report.

> 'An Irishman named W.H. Macdonald was brought from the Watch-house, charged with creating a breach of the peace last night in Smithford street. Whether he was a missionary sent out by Cardinal Wiseman or not, was doubtful; but, presuming he could convince the little boys in the street that Lord John Russell was wrong in designating the Roman Catholic religion as a mass of "superstitious mummeries," he commenced preaching what he called the doctrines of the true church. Instead, however, of convincing his audience that Popery was the right way, it excited their derision; and had not a policeman kindly locked him up, in all probability he would have been severely treated by the crowd, which had become rather large. While he was before the magistrates, he appeared very desirous of showing how pernicious it is to allow Dissenters of all denominations to read and form their own opinions of the Bible. He was told he was at perfect liberty to follow what he himself believed to be right, but he must not endanger the public peace by holding forth in the streets during the present excitement. - Discharged.'[8]

<u>Dissenters and the Maynooth Grant</u>

The *Standard* 16th May 1845 told of a meeting held in Vicar-Lane Chapel to object to the Maynooth Grant. Mr Sibree moved a resolution that the meeting viewed with

---

[7] *Coventry Standard* 8th November 1850

[8] See next note regarding possible identity of W.H. MacDonald.

serious apprehension, the proposal to increase the grant to Maynooth College and regarded it a 'deliberate step towards the establishment of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland'. He threatened local MPs that if they voted again in favour of the Bill at its third reading, they need not expect Dissenting support at the next election. He stated that their meeting objected in principle to state endowment of any church and was not aimed specifically at the Catholic Church. A Mr Macdonald spoke up to claim the Dissenters were ungrateful.[9] He was reported to have stated:

> 'Mr. O'Connell, before he obtained Catholic Emancipation helped them to get the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts; and now they rose up against an insignificant *lousy* grant. They did not act from principle. They were the ungrateful wretches that carried an iron sting in their bosoms. They wanted to put down the poor priests; but their religion stood on a rock too firm to be shaken.'

He said that 'Mr Sibree had ridiculed their religion in St. Mary's hall; and it was not from principle, but sectarian motives, that they opposed the grant.' (Here there was a great uproar). The report continued:

> 'Mr Maclean, another Irishman, rose and said he suspected the opposition to the grant was not from principle. He was not a Roman Catholic, he was a Dissenter; yet he wished the Dissenters to act consistently. If they read the resolution they would find it stated "that it was a deliberate step towards the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland." He thought they were not sincere. Why make all this noise against the grant to Maynooth, when the thousands that had been granted, in times past, for the support of other religions of which Mr Sibree had taken no notice. He was afraid there was something behind. –Mr. Gordon and Dr. Styles here interposed; and by a little *soft sawder* (as Sam Slick calls it), persuaded Mac (sic) to go off the platform, and let the business proceed.'[10]

Macdonald's and Maclean's contributions have been furnished here at some length as instances of migrant articulation in Coventry are rare. It shows that migrants were not all tongue-tied or spoke in the 'begorrah and bejapers' idiom. The comments of Macdonald - who was either a labourer, horse breaker, or watch finisher, depending on which of the Macdonald named possibilities that spoke - were more direct and passionate than those of weaver Maclean, who saw the contradiction between claims that there was no sectarian motive and the wording of the resolution. Interestingly all three possible Macdonalds were married to non-Irish-born wives, which did not lessen their commitment to Irish concerns, while Maclean was a Dissenter who was prepared to place a benefit to Irish Catholics ahead of a principle shared by his fellow Dissenters (See Appendix 2 for details of Thomas McLean). The *Herald* 6th June 1845 spoke against the grant, not as the lengthy article explained, for any reason of hostility to Catholics but because it did not solve or make restitution for past wrongs and was 'a knavish attempt to reconcile them to the wrong, by endowing their Maynooth College out of public taxes of the kingdom'. The same edition reported that a deputation of Dissenters: Rev. J. Sibree, Independent, Rev. J. Gordon, Unitarian, and Rev. J. Watts, Baptist had gone to London to meet MPs Edward Ellice (Whig) and William Williams

---

[9] There are three possibilities: In 1841 James Mackdonald was a 50 year old horse breaker from Ireland living in Cow lane with his 40 year old wife, from Kenilworth, and their eight children. HO107/1152 Book 7.14.21 ED 14. He was located in Jordan Well, Coventry in 1851. HO107/2067.118.24 ED 6; In 1851 James McDonald was a 30 year old Dublin-born watch finisher who lived with Coventrian wife Hannah, age 23 in Waterloo Street. HO107/2067,436.15 ED 21. They were not located in Coventry in 1861; William Macdonald was a 30 year old labourer from Cork, lodging in Warwick Lane with his 34 year old laundress, Alnwick-born wife, and 9m infant son born in Bedford. HO107/2067.325.18 ED 16.

[10] '*lousy*' and '*soft sawder*' italicised in original. The equivalent to 'soft sawder' in modern parlance would be 'soft soap'. Sam Slick was a character created by Thomas Chandler Haliburton.

(Radical) to petition against the Maynooth Bill. On their return they held a meeting in Cow Lane Chapel chaired by Rev. E.H. Delf. Both MPs were in favour of the bill although they agreed with sentiments of their visitors. Gordon spelled out the nature of opposition to the chapel congregation. He said their objection was not against the Catholic religion per se, not an old-style No-Popery cry, but against state endowment of any religion and that Catholics were being beguiled and bribed by Peel. The strength of feeling in 1847 against support for Catholics, may have been shown by Williams losing his parliamentary seat. The suggestions then given as to why he was not reelected were that he was not sufficiently prepared and organised for the election, and that he had lost the support of Dissenters when he voted in favour of the Education Bill in 1847 of which they disapproved. Perhaps not forgotten either among locals was that he said he had voted 'in pain' in favour of the endowment of Maynooth in 1845 and against the wishes of 'many persons whose opinions he respected'.[11] The strength of feeling about this Irish issue among the Dissenting clergymen of Coventry is shown by their willingness to travel to London to make their feelings known.

The *Coventry Standard* spoke against preferential treatment for the College of Maynooth. On 16th May 1845 it said:

> 'None of the inventions of Romanism are more contrary to the practice of the primitive Church, to the light of Nature, and to the voice of Scripture, than the enforced celibacy of the Romanist Clergy… It severs their Clergy from the people, and binds them to Rome… The number of Romanists in Ireland, and the necessities of the case, have, as Government allege, rendered it expedient that this degrading and suspicious regulation shall be so far conceded to, as to leave the College of Maynooth without any interference or superintendence on the part of the State.

Later Century Disapproval of Catholicism

Old animosity supported by timeless cliché was never too far below the surface. In 1864 the *Standard* reported that the Lancashire magistrates had granted £40 to provide an altar, crucifix and vestments for the chaplain, to facilitate Catholics in Preston gaol. It said that the clergy of Blackburn had protested to the Bishop of Manchester against the grant. The clergy stated 'the doctrine of Transubstantiation, the sacrifice of the Mass, and the adoration of images' was 'idolatry to be abhorred…and a fond thing vainly invented and grounded upon no warranty of the Scriptures'. They believed 'encouragement of these practices by grants of public money is contrary to the plain teaching of Holy writ, a dishonour to Almighty God, and is fraught with dangers to the well being of this nation'. The newspaper then took the opportunity, lest Liberals would claim how intolerant the clergy were, to remind how lacking in concessions Rome was – 'She exacts everything and concedes nothing'. It recalled that less than two years earlier a non-sectarian industrial school was established in Preston for the young. It was thought appropriate that a short hymn would be sung by all children at the end of the school day. However Roman Catholic 'professors kicked up a dust about it. Their notions of toleration and religious liberty did not extend so far as to endure this brief form of Christian fraternization…and the simple act of thanking God for his goodness was dispensed with'.[12]

---

[11] Daniel Evans, *The Life and Work of William Williams: M.P. for Coventry 1835-1847, M.P. for Lambeth 1850-1865*, (Llandysul 1939) pp. 74, 75, 105

[12] *Coventry Standard* 15th October 1864

The *Standard* 20th December 1867 could not resist an attempt to implicate the Catholic Church in the Fenian terror. A flavour of its chagrin is found in the following passage:

> 'We have seen the highest dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church exalting murderers to the position of martyrs in the cause of their country; and a constant parade of the most imposing religious ceremonial in honour of their memories; and we have seen a titled lady in England avowing the same sympathy in a published letter, and showing more regard for the family of the murderer, than for that of his victim. And we contend that all from whom such incentives, and all such demonstrations of favour towards law breakers in the very worst of forms proceed, are in a degree responsible for the dastardly and bloody career of crime into which they have at last plunged. It has become quite evident that Romanism is now fighting - not for the attainment of civil and religious rights and privileges - but is fighting for the supremacy both in England and Ireland. The whole course of British legislation for the last 40 years has been one of concession to the Roman Catholics… Now, after what has just occurred in London, not only simple-minded, but intelligent people will, we think, be more convinced than ever that the old 5th of November plot was a reality, and properly attributed to the Roman Catholics…we may say with truth, that there can be no longer any doubt as to what the Fenian section of the Pope's followers are capable of.'

The *Coventry Standard* 17th September 1875 reprinted from the *Times* (and using its italicisation) a sharp attack on the Catholic Church, under the heading 'Romanism and Rationalism'. In part it stated:

> 'We do not know how far we should agree with Cardinal Manning in his view of the nature and extent of Rationalism. But so far as there is a hasty repugnance to everything in the shape of religious dogma, as great part of the blame, if not the greater part, lies at the door of those who have reduced dogmas to the absurdities of Papal Infallibility or the Immaculate Conception, and who have degraded devotion into the mere sensuous ecstasy of the fable of the Sacred Heart. The Roman Catholic Church has been its own worst enemy; and there are too good reasons for regarding it *as the worst enemy to all Churches and Religions*. The explanation of its rejection by Englishmen is far more simple than Cardinal Manning supposes.'

While such animosity towards Catholic clerics was par for the *Standard*, a decade later the *Herald* could print a piece from the *Times* entitled 'English Roman Catholics', reflecting on whether a person, might or not be, a thorough Englishman if not an Anglican. It set out clearly the fundamental basis, centred on loyalty, on which its test was made. It remarked of a person who with open eyes accepted Roman Catholicism that he has 'placed himself under the complete control of a priesthood, and has submitted his conscience to a potentate who ostentatiously anathematizes the principles on which the English state has for at least three centuries been founded'. The article observed that 'It is bad enough that a man's conscience should be the slave of any authority at all, but when that authority is an Italian Prelate it is vain for him to claim the sympathies of Englishmen'.[13] The *Herald* 9th June 1876 included a letter signed "Eye Witness" who criticised the processions, between St. Mary's Hall and St. Michael's Church, and who saw them as a Romanistic spectacle. The letter writer saw the Church of England priests as smoothing the way for people to convert to Rome.

[13] *Coventry Herald* 25th September 1874

Appendix 11

Convents, St. Mary's Church, the Coventry School Board

The *Times* 30th April 1862 reported on a recent Tea Meeting held in Warwick attended by Father Pratt and Father Moore. The former in expressing thanks to the ladies who organised the meeting revealed what he thought of Coventry and himself. He said:

> '…he was only a poor man coming from a very poor place. They would all be satisfied that, what he did say would come from his heart, and would be really an expression of his feelings. Their object was to aid the poor. The proceeds of the party were for the poor. He had much to do with the poverty of Coventry. Amongst the poor, he was a poor man himself. Coming from the poverty of Coventry to the respectable county town of Warwick, and seeing such things as he had seen on that occasion, he felt constrained to say "Well done!" to the ladies of Warwick'.

Father Moore said that he would digress a little to tell that 'they were about to introduce nuns into that city; they were already aware of that fact, for he had been amongst them begging'. He remarked they had no beds for the nuns, no furniture and only a half dozen chairs. The poverty of Catholic Coventry had been mentioned earlier in 1856. Then the *Dublin Weekly Nation* 10th May 1856 contained an appeal as follows:

> 'Coventry is one of those English towns, the Catholic portion of whose population is composed, almost exclusively, of our own countrymen, almost every Catholic in the town and its vicinity being either Irish or of Irish extraction, and, we are sorry to add, belonging also to about the poorest class of their country…to meet the want that exists there the Benedictine Fathers, who have charge of the mission, are endeavouring to erect a large schoolroom which… will be so arranged as to serve as a temporary chapel. For this purpose they have already procured an admirably situated site; their plan for the proposed building is simple and economic, and the poor Catholics of the mission have organised a collection among themselves, which, however, would be hopelessly inadequate without some extraneous assistance. The Rev. Father Price, O.S.B, one of the clergy of the Coventry Mission is in Dublin soliciting contributions…'[1]

The Annals of the Sisters of Mercy relate that weekly collections and appeals had been made as early as 1850 in order to purchase the land for St. Mary's convent and school in Raglan Street. About half-an-acre was purchased for £500 which provided sufficient room for a church to be built in the future. The Raglan Street district was an infill area between the development to the immediate north-west at Hillfields and that formed by westerly ribbon development along Gosford Street. The closely arranged terraced streets in the vicinity had been constructed over the previous thirty years, were heavily occupied by ribbon weavers. The Enumeration Area in which it was located in 1871 possessed 936 people but apart from the school occupants noted below, contained just two Irishcom families. At 10 Raglan Street resided Irish-born Thomas Edmonds a sugar boiler aged 50 (blind 20 years), his Exhall born wife also 50 years, and two Coventry-born daughters aged 17 and 14. In Alma Street (Sch 136) lived David Mason a 30 year

[1] A Father Charles Wilfrid Price O.S.B was mentioned as serving in Chideock, Dorset 1853-4, and in Abergavenny, Monmouth 1857. He was parish priest of Maesteg, Bridgend 1872-73. https://archive.org/stream/historicalnoteso00kelluoft/historicalnoteso00kelluoft_djvu.txt Accessed 21st January 2019

old Coventry-born chemist and druggist with his 28 year old Dublin-born wife, who was a trimming maker, and their 7 year old Coventry-born daughter.[2] As these two couples show, at this time and in this area, with a low ratio of Irishcom to the total population, intermarriage and the growth of the Coventrian by birth second generation was occurring. The school catchment area would have included nearby Enumeration Areas of (Palmer Lane) and (New Buildings) where over 100 Iriscom resided, many still distinctively 'Irish' as shown by high number of Irish intra-marriages.

St. Mary, Mercy Convent, Raglan Street

Around 1861 the provincial of the Benedictines convinced the Sisters of Mercy in Chelsea to found a convent in Coventry on the basis that although the mission would be poor they would never want for spiritual advice, they would be destined to be the centre of a new and promising mission, and they would have their own church. Stressed to them were the beneficial effects of their presence in the town, where a number of young girls and children were employed in the silk factories. The Sisters of Mercy understood that on their arrival in Coventry the convent building was to be legally made over to them and that contributors had given money on this basis. According to the Annals they made an introductory visit to Coventry where a keen Fr Pratt showed them the plans and repeated several times that the land and buildings would be theirs. However they were to come to see Fr Pratt as 'being by no means business like in his ways or dealings'.[3] When they came to inspect the completed building they appeared to have thought it was built on the cheap and were shocked, describing it as 'a small inconvenient house without, kitchen, pantry, wash-house or scullery of any kind'. Expecting neat cells on the second floor they saw 'a large open loft without as much as a door to shut it off from the stairs which came up into it…with rough wooden beams slanting in four directions from roof to floor'. Relations with Fr Pratt deteriorated and he remarked in 1863 'that they were totally inefficient for the school work and that the superior was anything but congenial to him'. Friction was such that there was serious talk of the nuns leaving Coventry because either they wished to leave or because Fr Pratt had asked them to leave. The failure to give them ownership of the convent was a constant irritation; it was 1874 before the convent was finally transferred to them. There were disputes too with Father Pratt over the allocation of grants of money to the school. Mother Mary Elizabeth had, as Teresa Watkins, joined the Sisters of Mercy in Chelsea in 1845, been professed in 1848, and become superior there in 1852. Even there she was conscious that some pastors could over-expect 'works of mercy' to be offered by nuns while the same pastors did not show full appreciation of the time or clerical support required by these religious women in order to carry out in a convent setting their personal spiritual exercises which they regarded as of equal importance as their social work. In Coventry, as Mother Mary Elizabeth, she left an impression that work so consumed the nuns' time that they had insufficient opportunity to develop spiritually. She drew to Father Pratt's attention the lack of understanding in his outlook, which was, that apart from school work he felt they had no other demand on their time. He insensitively declared: 'You must remember that you have not come to the best; that place you have left, where you would say office and the rest in the day.' She answered that it was her 'duty to see that it becomes the same sort of place in these matters'.[4] His handling of the introduction of

[2] RG10/3180.108.1 ED 16

[3] 'Coventry Annals', General Archives of the Union of the Sisters of Mercy of Great Britain, Handsworth, Birmingham pp. 1-126

[4] Carmen M. Mangion, The 'Mixed Life': Challenging Understandings of Religious Life in Victorian England, in Laurence Lux-Sterritt & Carmen M. Mangion (eds.), *Gender, Catholicism and Spirituality: Women and the Roman Catholic Church in Britain and Europe, 1200-1900*, (Basingstoke 2011) p. 173

the nuns to Coventry lies at odds with the genial characterisation of his activity elsewhere.

The early years were ones of poverty and struggle, given its establishment following the collapse of the silk weaving industry; a nun remarked that there were few benefactors 'as the Catholics are nearly all poor'. By 1863 the school was opened and Sunday Mass was celebrated by chaplains from St. Osburg's in a classroom, with 216 Catholics attending each week by 1881.[5] In the relevant Coventry Annals there is no mention of the Irish, little mention of social work or social observation. The volume comprising the Annals provided a yearly review of the achievements of the convent and the nuns' educational endeavours. A settled routine emanates as the years unrolled, with occasional apprehensions such a severe winter recorded in 1865, that in 1872 four sisters were affected by scarlatina, while in 1882 the boarding school, referred to below, was not doing well that year.

Table A.11.1 reveals from 1871 to 1891 there was stability and continuity in the convent, provided by Teresa Watkins who remained in charge, by two Irish nuns who were seen to serve in the three censuses and by a third, Elizabeth Morrison who present from 1881 up to and including 1911.

[5] SS Mary and Benedict Roman Catholic Church, Coventry Website http://www.ssmaryandbenedict.org.uk/parish-history.html Accessed 21st January 2019

Table A.11.1 Relevant Occupants of the Convent of St. Mary, 44 Raglan Street, 1871-1901						
Name	**R to H**	**Con**	**A:F**	**Occupation**	**Born**	**Lifespan**
1871 (Teresa Watkins; Head)						
Teresa Watkins	Head	Un	50	School Mistress	Middx London	1821-1901 (80)
Eleanor Burgess		Un	53	School Assistant	Huntingdon Elton	1817-1878 (61)
Mary McGregor		Un	28	School Assistant	Cork	1842-1901 (59)
Mary Murphy		Un	35	School Assistant	Liverpool	1836-1918 (82)
Sarah Ann Rice		Un	35	School Assistant	Birmingham	1838-1890 (52)
Margaret O'Shea		Un	35	School Assistant	Cashel, Co. Tipp	1836-1921 (85)
Margaret Sullivan	Serv	Un	40	Dom Serv Cook	Co Cork	1829-1896 (67)
Elizabeth Ranshaw	Serv	Un	22	Dom Serv Housemaid	Kilkenny	
Mary Byrne	Visitor	Un	36	School Teacher	Wexford	
Sarah Lawton	Boarder	Un	27	School Teacher	Liverpool	
1881 (Irish-Born Occupants; Teresa Watkins Head; Total 11)						
Mary McGregor	Res	Un	38	Sister of Mercy Teacher	Cork	
Margaret Sullivan	Res	Un	50	Sister of Mercy Teacher	Cork	
Elizabeth Morrison	Res	Un	27	Sister of Mercy Teacher	Naas, Co. Kildare	
Anne Reddin	Serv	Un	19	Domestic Serv	Dublin	
1891(Irish-Born Occupants; Teresa Watkins Head; Total 10)						
Mary McGregor	Teacher	Un	48	Teacher	Ireland	
Margaret Sullivan	Serv	Un	61	Domestic Servant	Ireland	
Elizabeth Morrison	Serv	Un	35	Domestic Servant	Ireland	
1901(Irish-Born Occupants; Mary McGregor Head; Total 10)						
Mary McGregor	Head	Un	55	Teacher (Voluntary)	Ireland	
Margaret O'Shea[2]	Instit Mem	Un	65	Teacher Retired	Ireland	
Elizabeth Morrison[1]	Instit Mem	Un	48	Sick Nurse	Ireland	1856-1926 (70)
Susan J. Dorrian	Instit Board	Un	22	Teacher (Voluntary)	Ireland	

1 Present in 1911

2 Margaret O'Shea in Gosford Green school in 1881 and 1891 but had returned to the convent in 1901 and was present in 1911

3 Total 1911 reduced to only 4 as a number had moved to St. Josephs Convent, Walsgrave Road.

RG10/3180.125.36 ED 16; RG11/3073.37.38 ED 16; RG12/2454.64.48 ED 13; RG13/2912.97.39 ED 23

St. Joseph's Convent, Gosford Green

In 1868 the same order of nuns established a related convent known as St. Joseph's at Gosford Green where, according to an account which embellished its success, they provided for the 'the education of the wealthier classes, which has prospered greatly'.[6] An advertisement was placed in the *Dublin Weekly Nation* on 3rd July, 14th and 21st August, and 4th September 1869 seeking students from Ireland. (Figure A.11.1). Any notion that Coventry was an insalubrious location was addressed in the opening sentence, while the nature of the education was promoted as a solid 'English' one. Some factors may have played against the appeal of Coventry. Perhaps the advertisement may have been seen as an attempt to obtain future postulants. The effects of the city's depressed reputation in the early 1860s may not have quite dissipated, and perhaps neither an older one alluded to in *Weekly Freeman's Journal* 18th June 1842 which stated 'We feel that upon reflection our Leamington correspondent will be satisfied that

[6] Member of the Order of Mercy, *Leaves from the Annals of The Sisters of Mercy*, Vol. 2, (New York 1885) p. 97; Simpson, Centenary Memorial of Saint Osburg's, pp. 36, 37; 'The City of Coventry: Roman Catholicism', pp. 368-371

the details of the recent procession of Godiva in Coventry would be totally unfitted for the perusal of Irishwomen, and consequently unsuited for publication in an Irish journal'. The 1871 census first reveals the situation at 11 Gosford Terrace Convent with 15 enumerated. The head of this school for girls was 30 year old Sister Harriet Alexander born in West Bromwich, who with two 18 year old teachers and a cook was enumerated with 11 pupils. Three pupils were recorded from Dublin: Bridget and Teresa Cantrell together with Ethna McCarthy who was recorded as Epileptic and half witted.[7]

Dublin-born Hannah Lynch (1862-1904) wrote *Autobiography of a Child* published in 1889.[8] In this first-person narrative she wrote during her late twenties of her experience when she grew up in the 1860s. Her childhood memoir was controversial and in order to guard against court action which was being threatened by a bishop for reasons outlined below it was given a fictional gloss. However the locations and personae can still be clearly identified and it is for certain that she is referring to Coventry {Lysterby} and to the time she spent in Gosford Terrace convent {the Ivies} from when she was seven years old. Her two younger sisters Bridget and Teresa Cantwell were recorded as pupils in the school in the previous paragraph and she refers herself to the presence of 'an idiot girl' who was two years older than she was. Allowing for factual disparity caused by later life reflection and for possible bitterness at the way she was wronged by some cruel nuns, it remains as a vivid, informative and fortunately available, insight into aspects of Coventry experienced by Irish-born. She had a difficult relationship in Ireland with her mother and after rowing with her half-sister, along with making an effort to run away, she was sent to school in Coventry at the age of seven. The advertisement mentioned in the previous paragraph may have prompted her parents to select the school in Coventry. She recalls her stay in the convent with hurt at the way she was treated by a Sister Esmeralda. She felt as a child she was regarded as 'a common little Irish thing'. She felt semi-starved, money from home being confiscated by the nuns with letters of general complaint to her parents edited by the nuns. She was falsely accused of breaking a statue, and after being locked into a community room in St. Joseph's for some hours, in exasperation threw a chair at the cruel nun. She was brought to the Raglan Street convent where she recounts that 'I was simply led up-stairs to a brown cell, and here the red-cheeked lay-sister, a big brawny creature, stripped me naked. Naked, mind, though convent rules forbid the whipping of girls. I was eight, exceedingly frail and delicate. The superioress took my head tightly under her arm, and the brawn red-cheeked lay sister scourged my back with a three-pointed whip till the blood gushed from the long stripes and I fainted.' The doctor 'a cheery fellow with a Scottish name' {Dr McVeagh} attended her and she wondered: 'Was the secret kept among the superioress, the lay-sister who thrashed me, and the doctor?' As a Catholic in a Protestant town where the strongest anti-Rome

[7] RG10/3180.43.12 ED 12. In 1881 Harriet Alexander headed a total of 24 enumerated at St. Josephs Boarding School, 19 of whom were boarding girls but included no Irish-born. In 1891 she headed a total of 13 at St. Jospephs of whom 4 were pupils but there was no Irish-born. In 1901 Teresa Watkins now retired, headed a total of 27 at St. Josephs which included 4 Irish-born staff but did not include Irish-born among the 13 pupils recorded. Harriet was enumerated at Raglan Road in 1901 and in St. Josephs Walsgrave Road in 1911. She died in September 1932. There appears to have been a decided movement of most nuns from Raglan Street to St. Josephs in the decade prior to 1911. There was also in 1871 a boys' school in the charge of Sister Emma J. Best a 24 year old teacher born in Birmingham who with Ann Harvey an 18 year old general servant from Roscommon was enumerated with 6 young male scholars and a 2 year old female. This was not found in 1881 but she was enumerated in Raglan Street in that census before she died in 1884.

[8] Hannah Lynch, *Autobiography of a Child*, (New York 1899) http://hdl.handle.net/2027/iau.31858006144392 ; Faith Binckes & Kathryn Laing, Irish Autobiographical Fiction and Hannah Lynch's Autobiography of a Child *English Literature in Transition*, *1880-1920* Vol. 55, No 2, 2012 pp. 195-218

material could be read in the *Standard*, it is not unreasonable to suppose McVeagh a devoted member of the Catholic community, might wish to avoid a scandal. She recalled at the time of her confirmation the bishop, 'a man passed into history, a grave and noble man' {Bishop Ullathorne} paid her what she saw as an extraordinary distinction in asking for her by name in order that she could be brought to him. Following his friendly chat she was never slapped again being 'secretly protected by the bishop's admiration'.

The behaviour of the nuns may be seen as the product of its time; that she herself was a troublesome child, and she does acknowledge the kindness of a Sister Aloysius who appeared to have some understanding of child psychology. Nevertheless she was a mere child that had been physically abused. She captured the doctor's likely hushing up of what had the makings of an incident as likely embarrassing as a 'nunnery' type scandal. It would not have been to the advantage of the Catholic Church should it become public that the superioress of a convent that was advertising itself as an establishment offering a rounded education could behave so primitively (or that a three pointed whip was held by the nuns). Although it was not spelled out in her work as to what the bishop knew of the nastiness towards her, the narrative lends to the conclusion he did and put a stop to it. Whether 'Father Morris' {Father Moore} who was 'a graceful, aristocratic, soft-voiced man, quick to captivate little children by his winning smile' or Father Pratt knew of Lynch's thrashing in the presence of the Mother Superior and kept it quiet will remain in doubt. Father Pratt left the Coventry he knew so well around this time and returned directly to Downside (although he visited Coventry each July until his death in 1875). He was ill in January 1870, but whether his leaving was influenced to some degree by his worry about him being accused of hiding the scandal, should it ever become public, has merit as a question. Perhaps E.H. Delf's remark in 1876 about his incomprehensibility at Father Platt's removal from Coventry some years earlier may have had greater import than people realized.[9]

Her general depiction of the petty-minded, regulated convent atmosphere lies beyond the compass of this study but her recall of St. Osburg's at Easter is worthy of mention: 'the heavy perfume of incense in the cold aisles of the cathedral, whither we were conducted by the nuns for the breathlessly interesting offices of Holy Week. It is a long dream of sombre tones and solemn notes… the functions were rigidly correct. The evening office of Tenebrae was a funereal delight. The services of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday were religious excitements on which to live for months. I shut my eyes, even now in middle age, and I see again the long grey cathedral aisles dim in the taper-light, altars hung in black, and the lean aristocratic visage of Father More {Father Moore} above surplice and violet stole, and I hear him chant in his this, melodious voice, "Oremus, flectuamus genua!" and listen again for the response, "Levate!"'

[9] *Coventry Herald* 13th December 1876. The Priory seemed ultra-sensitive to any suggestion that activity in the convents was not above-board. The *Coventry Herald* 16th February 1877 included a letter from H.E. Moore relating to a missing girl. 'Sir, - As a deal of annoyance has been occasioned by reports of a missing girl of the name of Emily Hopkins, may I beg insertion of the accompanying letter from Messrs, Dewes, Son, and Wilks, on this subject. I hope this will have the effect of ending reports adversely circulating, affecting the Catholic Clergy of Coventry, or their co-religionists.' Part of the accompanying letter read: 'Re Emily Hopkins. Dear Sir, - Our Mr. Wilks had this day a full interview with the parents of the above girl, and also with the witnesses to the alleged meetings in December with Hopkins, when in the dress of a Sister of Mercy. The result of that interview has been to convince them that their daughter is certainly in nowise connected with any Catholic establishment in Coventry, and they desire us to express their regret at any unpleasant inquiries or suspicions they may have entertained…' No other reference could be found giving the background to this letter.

St. Mary and St. Benedict Church, Hood Street

Part of the building funds for St. Mary and St. Benedict church had been raised by Rev. Paul McCabe who went to America where he procured £500. A bazaar arranged with the assistance of Gwendeline Petre (who donated the altar) raised a further £800. The contract was for £3,994 and the architect was T.R. Donnelly who designed it in the Early English Gothic Revival style.[10]

At the dedication ceremony on 21st November 1893 Cardinal Vaughan asked what prompted the growth of socialistic, communistic and anarchical movements which he saw as bound to create social confusion and upset to the foundations of society. He blamed it on the 'decay or rejection of Christianity by masses of English people'. To him School Board education was also culpable as it 'professed to be religious when it was irreligious… [and] Without the controlling force of the Christian religion all the freedom and intellectual culture would result in confusion and anarchy'. He made a strong case for denominational education and the necessity of guarding it lest it was robbed, by a zealous Education Department, who were imposing ever heavier burdens on school managers, which financially disadvantaged voluntary schools. He wanted to receive - and would not cease agitating for - enough money from the public purse, to educate Catholic children, by Catholic teachers in a Catholic atmosphere, 'without the indignity of being muleted and fined and forced to go round the streets begging'. In all this Vaughan was speaking of national concern, but it had particular Coventry application as the School Board election was to be held the following Autumn. The 'movements' of which he spoke, were finding articulation in Coventry within six months of his speech. In May 1894 a demonstration was held in Pool Meadow attended by several hundreds which was organised by the Coventry and District Trades and Labour Council and the Coventry branch of the Social Democratic Federation. The Chairman said that while the workers comprised three-quarters of the population they were like the slaves of former days and completely under the control of the capitalists. The secretary of the Trades Council recommended a proposal 'in favour of the collective ownership of land and the means of production and distribution'.[11] Father Richard Rea remained priest of this new parish from its inception until his death in 1915 (Figure 4.14). The *Coventry Herald* 4th May 1894 provided a rare look at the kind of topic about which the priest might have animated his congregation. He told them they had an opportunity to test their religion by giving donations that day to help the sick in the hospital. They should not use any unworthy excuses such as saying that because the hospital is not well managed this would justify them withholding a donation.

Father Moore and the Coventry School Board

In the *Coventry Herald* 3rd November 1876 attention was drawn to a flysheet addressed to the Catholic Burgesses of Spon-Street War signed by J. Pinches, W. Moore, T. Hennessey and T. Jackson. They appealed to Catholics to vote for the Conservatives William Wyley and Robert Choules in the Municipal Election. Firstly on the basis that they said Catholics were treated shamefully, when Mr. Petre the Catholic candidate, at the School Board election in 1873 failed to be elected because he was ruthlessy ignored by the Liberals. Second because they said Liberals would impose a Godless Education a prospect that was disdained by Catholic parents. Thirdly because they said Catholics historically owed nothing to Dissenters. A letter signed 'Protestant Liberal' to the

[10] *Coventry Herald* 6th January 1893; A fete was also held at Edward and Lady Gwendeline's Whitley Abbey in August 1894 which was attended by Fr P McCabe, R. P. Rea, Norbert Birt and E. Kelly. (The *Tablet* 18th August 1894); Lady Gwendeline's funeral was held in the church in 1910. Taking Stock, Catholic Churcfhes of England & Wales http://taking-stock.org.uk/Home/Dioceses/Archdiocese-of-Birmingham/Coventry-St-Mary-and-St-Benedict Accessed 21st January 2019

[11] *Birmingham Daily Post* 7th May 1894

Coventry Herald 17th November 1876 refuted the circular's content. After outlining how over the century the Liberals had served Catholic advancement it stated 'Mr Pinches himself for years belonged to the Liberal party, and if as a Catholic, he thought the Tories were his true friends, he must have been a remarkably stupid man not to have joined them sooner. Perhaps in signing the paper which his newly-found friends wrote for him, he was simply thinking of himself…' It was noted earlier that mischief making was a feature of Coventry Elections.

The *Coventry Herald* 24th November 1876 contained a letter from H.E. Moore explaining why he was seeking a place on the Coventry School Board. It showed his tact and complaisance together with his amiable strategy of reassuring readers that he was prepared to be non-confrontational in dealing with difficulty that might arise after he would join the Board.

> 'That the Catholics of Coventry should be represented on the Board appeared to me, with many others but right; that, however, the clerical element should be introduced by my presenting myself I feared might be distasteful to some of the burgesses. Could, therefore, another representative have been found I should certainly not have come forward.
> As, however, matters stand at present between the two political parties in Coventry, cleric though I am, they have generously consented to sink their differences in my favour. For this act of kindness I feel truly grateful, as thereby a contested election, with all its attendant evils, has happily been avoided.
> And now, at once, let me set to rest the fears of any persons that on my part there will be anything of an aggressive spirit. At present I believe there is nothing before the board, nor likely to come before it, on which there can be room for serious differences. Should, however, circumstances hereafter arise - such as to introduce any bone of contention - it will be my earnest endeavour to take my part in debating questions charitably, and in a spirit of meekness. At the same time I trust I shall not be wanting in my duty, both as regards the real interests of the city and those of my fellow Catholics.

In the column adjoining that which contained Moore's letter was the report of an address by Nonconformist E.H. Delf. It was a long piece giving reasons for his objection to private denominational education being supported by public money. Almost parallel to where Moore's letter was printed was the following excerpt which could be seen almost as a spoiler of Moore's appeal. The opportunity was not missed by Delf to stir in the old insinuation about where the loyalty of a Catholic truly lay.

Delf wrote:

> 'In the elections of the Coventry School Board I had further reasons to dissent. A Roman Catholic Priest is on the board. I object to this. Not to Father Moore, as a man, but as a Priest. The Roman Catholic Church of which he is a Priest does not believe in School Boards or School Board education. Why, therefore, should he be on the Board? At this particular time I have stronger objections than ever. The motto of Rome is "Semper Eadem." ["Always the same"] How she reconciles this with her change of faith it is not for me to say. What I direct attention to is that she has entered on a policy of external violence; Rome has refurbished and paraded anew every rusty weapon of her past history. Nobody can become her convert without surrendering his mental freedom, his moral freedom, and his loyalty to the Queen.'

Father Birt and the Coventry School Board

The change that the elapse of 18 years would bring to the style of pitch for the same seat on the Board can be seen in the 1876 letter of humble, then 52 years, Moore and the 1894 letter of confident Birt (below in final section). It is to be mentioned that Birt on writing was a younger 33 years, highly lettered and was explaining the raison d'etre for sectarian education at a time when its purpose was more questioned. Moore had been in Coventry since 1859 and from those 17 years had concluded his gentle approach was suited. Birt was in Coventry at most two years at the time of his direct writing, but Pereira who was rector and who had already given respected service to the Board may have guided his approach.

The *Coventry Herald* 16th November 1894 contained letters from Liberal and Conservative candidates seeking votes for election to the Coventry School Board. Henry Norbert Birt also wrote a letter seeking votes as a Catholic Independent candidate.[12] He showed he could clearly and succinctly lay out the reasons for the Catholic Church insisting on its own policy in schools:

> 'Education should be sufficient and efficient; but it cannot be either one or the other unless embracing the training of the heart and will as the intellect and physical powers of the body, for education is the development of all the powers in common. No system of education can adequately meet these requirements unless based on religion taught systematically, like any other, by properly trained teachers; I am, therefore strongly opposed to a merely secular education, and I strongly maintain that parents have a primary and inalienable right to see that their children are taught religious belief in accordance with what they themselves conscientiously believe to be right, as they, and they alone, are answerable to God for the souls of their little ones. My experience, extending over fifteen years, either as a professor, or a manager of voluntary schools, guaranteeing a technical knowledge of educational questions, entitles me to a respectful claim on your votes.'

The *Coventry Herald* 23rd November 1894 reported that Father Birt had secured a seat with most of his votes plumbers.[13]

[12] *Coventry Herald* 16th November 1894

[13] 'Plumbers' - The system for election gave one vote for each vacancy but the voter could cast all his votes for a single candidate. This ensured that Catholics could get one person onto the Coventry Education Board.

Appendix 12

Aspects of family life
Four generation case study of the Doran Family

In Chapter 5 details of the John Lamb's sons were pursued as second generation exemplars. This Appendix section with the assistance of Figure A.12.1 outlines the severely pruned family tree bearing the surname Doran in order to show how second, third and fourth generations fared in relation to the city. The elucidation of the happenings of this family shows the measured social response of Dublin weavers and provides a counterview to the behaviour that was a concern in Chapter 3. It illustrates complexity: of family developments and directions taken, of responses to the challenges of early death, to finding employment and of involvement with and commitment to Coventry. Reference was made in Chapter 5 to both Patrick Doran (1819-1877), a weaver who made a brief appearance in Class 2 and Thomas Doran (1809-1887) whose family made the rare disclosure of being 'weavers at home'.[1] They were most likely Dublin-born brothers who came to Coventry along with parents Patrick (1776-1846) and Eliza (1785-1846) and siblings.[2] Charlotte wife of Patrick (1819-1877) bore him a son Thomas (1840-1876) before she died in 1842.[3] He remarried to Mary by 1851 and they with Thomas and four more children were living in Upper Well Street.[4] The life of one son *William Bernard* (1847-21) is outlined further here. In 1861 *William Bernard* with his father Patrick and the rest of the family had moved to 5 Albert Street and were still there in 1871 (Figure A.12.2).[5] The *Standard* 29th March 1872 reported that *William Bernard Doran*, watch finisher or motioner, before the Mayor at a court held in St. Mary's Hall, was made a Freeman of the city. *William Bernard* was a watchmaker in 1891 but in 1901 he worked as a 50 year old Prudential Assurance Agent.[6] His resident, employed son Patrick Ambrose, was an 18 year old grocer's assistant and his resident, employed 22 year old daughter Mary Osburga was a dressmaker. It would appear that Patrick left for Paterson, Passaic, New Jersey, USA, in 1902, followed by younger

---

[1] *Coventry Times* 4th April 1877

[2] It is presumed that Patrick Doran (1778-1846) (Warwickshire Church of England Burials 1813-1910, 15th March 1846) and Elizabeth (1781/5-1861) (*Coventry Standard* 6th September 1861) who were living in Warwick Lane in 1841 were parents, while their sister was Mary Anne Doren in February 1837 who married Peter Hewson an Irish-born weaver with whom she resided in Jordan Well in 1841 (England, Select marriages 1538-1975 FHL Film Number 502205,1837, p. 234 cn 702).

[3] England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1842, Warwickshire Vol. 16, p. 28. Thomas was in the 1st Royal Foot, when he died in Bengal, India aged 36 years according to the *Coventry Herald* 9th June 1876.

[4] The children were entered in error in the 1851 enumerator's book as Dubliners HO107/2068.85.25 ED 1d; England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1844, Warwickshire Vol. 16, p. 558; Mary his wife died in April 1871 aged 57 (*Coventry Standard* 7th April 1871); John died young (1845-1855). They had two daughters: Catherine who became a nun in Princethorpe and Mary who was a general servant with Basil Riley (See Appendix 2).

[5] RG10/3181.30.9 ED 18; An insight into the condition of the house Patrick Doran rented at 5 Albert Street can be gleaned from an advertisement placed in the *Coventry Standard* 8th April 1870 by D.G. Barnes (referred to in this Chapter) offering the house for sale by public auction. It read: All those three newly-erected 3 storey HOUSES being Nos. 3, 4, and 5 Albert-street, Hill Fields Coventry, in the occupation of Peter Doran, Samuel Thompson, and Thomas Proffit, at the annual rent of £22. 2s. The property is well built, is in a good state of repair. Each house comprises parlour, kitchen, pantry, coalhouse, two capital chambers and large weaver's shop, with water laid in to each house over sink; small garden at back to each, and right of road from Adelaide-street through entry. There was no Peter Doran; this may have been a simple error or it may have been an effort to reduce possible negative connotations attached to a house that had been let to an Irish-born as the name Patrick might suggest.

[6] He was married to Maria Gooney a sister of Albert who was one of the 'Catholics of Coventry'. He was still residing at 5 Albert St in 1881 but, as was common, was found at different addresses in subsequent censuses.

brother Joseph Augustine in 1904. They were joined by *William Bernard*, and his daughter Winifred Theresa. Mary Osburga his other daughter followed in 1907.[7]

Around the corner from Albert Street, at no 24 Bradford Street, Hillfields resided Thomas Doran (1809-1887) mentioned at the outset of this section. In 1861 he was living at that address with his three sons - Thomas, *Joseph* (taken further below) and James - all were 'at home' weavers.[8] James (1845-1918) married Mary Ann Beaufoy of Foleshill.[9] In October 1870 a number of weavers' deputations sought meetings with their employers to ask for a wage advance. James chaired an initial workers' gathering in the Elephant & Castle, Hill Fields, called to discuss the best strategy to operate when encountering the employers. He then formed part of a deputation of the hands that approached Franklin and Son.[10] It was well received by Mr Franklin, and James reported back the cordial reception to fellow weavers the following week. In December 1870 the weavers of Coventry held a congratulatory dinner to denote their satisfaction on receiving a raise in pay. During the evening Doran was one of a number of contributors of songs and recitations.[11] The 1871 census showed he was only 25 years old, but at that young age he felt confident, and willing to identify with and to present the case of his fellow workers. Their approval of him would suggest his third-generation Irish standing gave him no cause him to feel socially isolated.[12] Though he appears at home in the Coventry setting when he was next located in the census of 1891 he was working in Manchester as a news agent packer.[13]

Joseph Doran (1843-1918) was the only son resident with Thomas in 1871.[14] He married Elizabeth Judd in 1871 but she died in 1877 aged 33 ; they had one daughter called Mary and a son Joseph (1873- <1939).[15] In 1881 *Joseph* now a 38 year old widower and weaver was residing with William at 5 Albert Street. His second marriage was to Agnes Smith in 1887.[16] *Joseph* was one of the 'Catholics of Coventry' that signed Fr Pereira's address in 1891. At 5 Gas St in 1901 he was a 48 year old cotton weaver and his two employed daughters Mary 25 and Ellen 13 were woollen pickers. By 1911 he had moved again and was living at 24 Ryley Street as a cloth weaver. With

---

[7] Information from Jenny Taffolla Kling Family Tree at Ancestry.com Accessed 21st August 2017

[8] RG9/2209.30.15 ED 23; Thomas Francis (1809-1887) was married to Mary Beaver who was a sister of James Patrick Beever who was one of the 'Catholics of Coventry'. On 7th June 1840 Thomas Doran (1840-1873) son of Thomas Francis Doran (1809-1887) was baptised in St. Osburg's (England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975 St. Osburg, Coventry FHL Film Number 1999854). He was recorded in 1871 as a beerhouse keeper in Manchester. There with him was his wife Jane (who he married in 1865) and two-sister-in-laws who were all nieces of John Lamb (RG10/4040.26.7 ED 2).

[9] *Coventry Standard* 17th April 1868

[10] Ibid. 14th October 1870

[11] Ibid. 16th December 1870

[12] RG10/3180.68.30 ED 13

[13] RG12/3193.123.38 ED 30; His wife, Foleshill-born Mary Ann and 4 children resided with him. His 9 year old youngest son was Mancunian so he must have left Coventry in the early 1880s. In 1911 he had been married 7 years to, and was assistant to Mary Josephine Doran from Dublin who was a clothing outfitter in Manchester. RG14/23864 ED 36

[14] The *Coventry Herald* 9th November 1877 report of the death of Thomas Arthur, who was Joseph's infant son, reminds of risks to health that faced the vulnerable during the century, due to inadequate medical answers or provision. There were 3 daughters resident with Thomas (sisters of Joseph) in 1871 – with Anne then a 19 year old ribbon weaver becoming domestic housekeeper to Albert Gooney in 1901 who was one of the 'Catholics of Coventry'; The *Coventry Herald* 1st July 1864 noted Joseph Doran, ribbon weaver, became a Freeman of Coventry.

[15] *Coventry Standard* 24th November 1871; England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915, Warwickshire Vol. 6d p. 283. It is quite possible that Elizabeth died at the time the death notice of Thomas Arthur, infant son of Mr Joseph Doran of Albert Street was published in the Coventry Herald 9th November 1877. Date of Joseph's death could not be ascertained, but he died before his wife, who passed away in 1939.

[16] Both wives were Coventrian; England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915, Warwickshire 6d p. 442

him was Ellen, now a cloth mender while John his 19 year old son was a printer, Thomas at 17 was a clerk in a motor works and Agnes 14 was a business clerk. The family of 7 were all born in Coventry and their engagement with quintessential occupations of the city was complete. In 1914 on attending evening school Thomas Doran and Agnes Doran passed in Shorthand Advanced, while the latter passed in Typewriting and Commercial correspondence.

In a review it is to be noted the second generation consisted of two migrant weavers, brothers Patrick and Thomas. The focus is on *William Bernard* as son of the former and particularly *Joseph* as son of the latter. *William Bernard Doran* crossed into the generic Coventry activity of watchmaking and became a freeman. At the turn of the century watchmaking (or Coventry) seemed to offer little promise and he with his fourth generation children, emigrated (as his parents had done) to Paterson, N.J. which was actually a weaving town. *Joseph Doran* was a weaver like his father and grandfather, and reflected his identity largely through Catholic action. His children as fourth generation were in occupations that showed, in those terms, they had integrated. Their initiative in attending evening school showed the Irish stereotype of slothful indifference did not apply.[17] The knitted relationship between Irish background and fidelity to Catholicism could be also be seen in the family of Patrick Doran (1819-1877) whose daughter was a nun and his son having been named *William Bernard* after Ullathorne. It is to be noted both this Patrick and his nephew *Joseph* had married twice. *Joseph's* children had not moved beyond working-class occupations by 1911, and were of a type that represented old and new Coventry. Also noticed is that the Doran families had resided at different addresses around the city but the connection to the city, as shown by the exit of the family of *William Bernard* and James, was deceptively not as deep as appeared. By 1891 the third generation and their families being local born, and no longer in the ambit of a recognisable Irish household, evaded capture of a normal decennial census harvest. It is only, in the decade of this writing, that the provision of on-line census data with the invaluable ability to permit cross-referencing of family details, that a four generation vista on this exemplar family reaching from the 18th to the 20th century can be presented.

[17] *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 30th July 1914; The *Coventry Standard* 25th June 1847 published an anecdote 'strongly illustrating that slothful indifference which characterizes the poorer classes of the Irish people'.

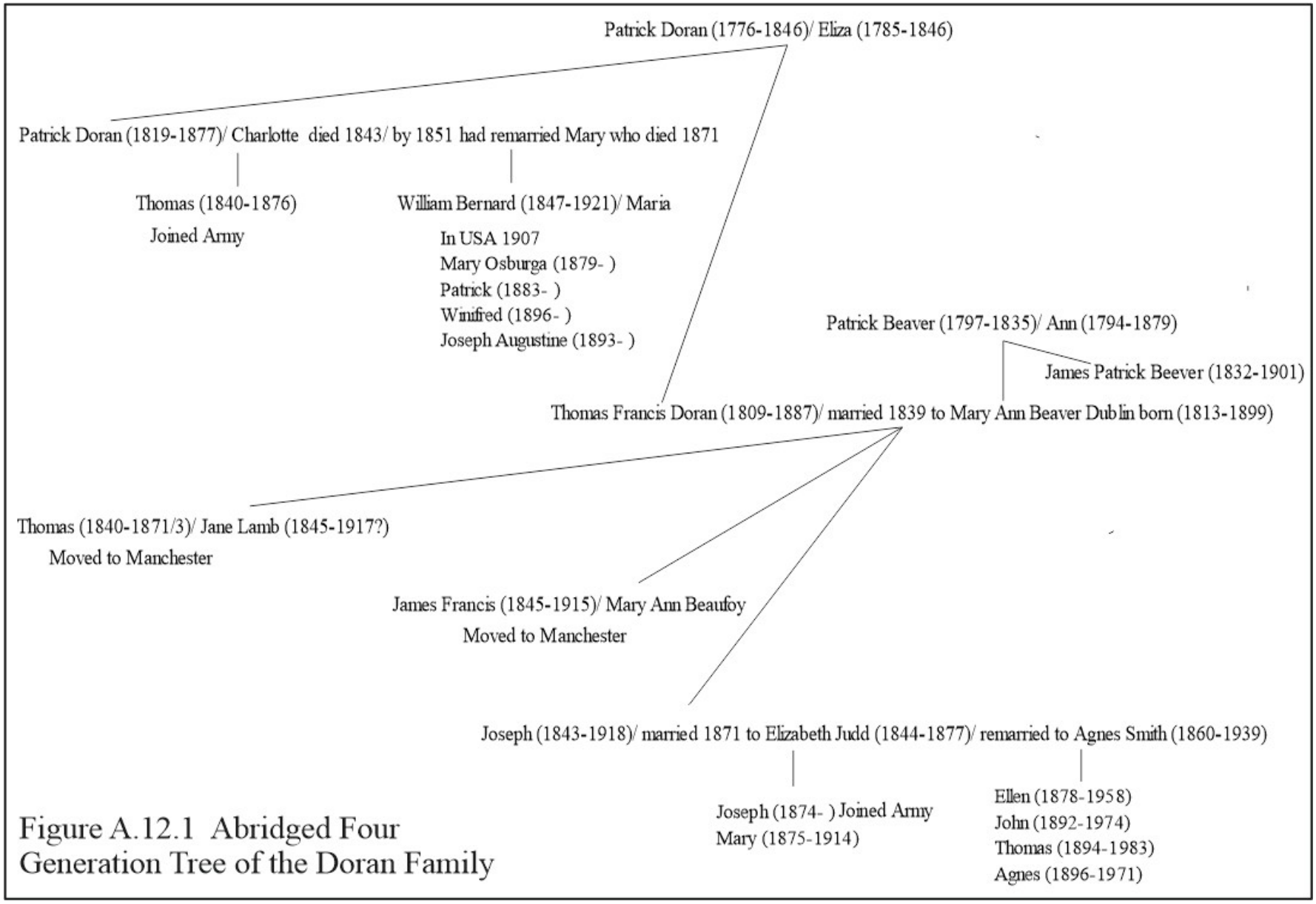


Figure A.12.1 Abridged Four Generation Tree of the Doran Family

Thomas F. Burke (1854-1918)

It was announced in the *Coventry Herald* 9th July 1875 that H.E. Moore had officiated at the marriage of Thomas Burke to Ann Maria Baker in St. Osburg's. Thomas was a tailor and younger son of the Peter Burke (See Table 3.2). She was a worsted weaver from Stoke Green, with no Irish background. By 1881 they had two children Edmund and Mary A.[18] Ann Maria, of H2C3 Cow Lane died aged 27, on 17th April 1882.[19] Thomas married Louisa Davies in the Register Office of Leamington on 29th October 1883.[20] She appeared to have no Irish background. They lived in Birmingham for some years according to the births of their children, before moving to Coventry where their infant son Thomas was born in Coventry in 1890.[21] In 1901 Thomas F. now age 45, lived with Louisa and their eight children at 29 Godiva St. The working children were Francis age 16 who was a cycle frame maker, and Florence age 14 who was a ribbon weaver.[22] In 1911 Thomas, age 58, was an inmate of the workhouse.[23] The family lived at 68 Butts with Francis as household head. All had been baptized in Holy Trinity. The following listing of the occupations of those present shows how this generation had become part of the normal employment profile of the city. Francis, Head, Age 27, Electrical assemblatory & Storage battery maker; Louise, Mother, Age 50; Thomas, Brother, Age 20, Painter & paperhanger; Samuel, Brother, Age 18, Coach-smith; Louise, Sister, Age 16, Clerk (Cycle Agent); William Joseph, Brother, Age 13, School; Ada, Sister, Age 11, School.[24]

It is to be noted how this family of a second generation Irish-born would not have featured in any Irish-born standard census trawl. Also, that the continuation of Roman Catholic practice should not to be assumed; the apparent ease with which second - generation Irish could find English-born wives; the sojourn in neighbouring Birmingham for some years; and Thomas' surprising denouement in the workhouse. A subsequent generation could also brush with the law. In 1914 William Josph admitted in court stealing 2s., belonging to the Coffee Tavern Co. The Chief Constable said the lad had been bound over on two occasions for stealing cycles and neither time had expired. The Chairman of the Magistrates remarked that putting the prisoner on probation had no effect and he would adopt a sharper method by gaoling him for 28 days with hard labour.[25]

The two children by Thomas's marriage to Ann Maria Baker did not live with Thomas and Louisa. They were found in 1891 living in 10 Abbott's Lane, as nephew and niece of Alice Baker.[26] This residential separation from the father was not on religious grounds as Edmund married in 1905 in the Anglican Church, Stoke.[27]

Mary Eaves, Midwife and her times

Mary Eaves who lived in Spon End was one of seven midwives in Coventry. She attended 4,438 births between 1847 and 1875. She maintained a register of women she attended and parts of the register survive and have been indexed.[28] In the knowledge

[18] RG11/3067.29.16 ED 11
[19] *Coventry Herald* 21st April 1882
[20] Ibid. 23rd November 1883; Marriage was solemnized in the Anglican Parish Church of Leamington Priors. Church of England Marriages & Banns, Warwickshire County Record Office. Anglican Registers; Roll: Engl 0900064, Ref: DR 515/31
[21] RG12/2453.56.23 ED 8
[22] RG13/2906.25.19 ED 2
[23] RG14/18538.4 EDs 28 & 29
[24] RG14/18531 196 ED 21
[25] *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 6th July 1914
[26] RG12/2452.48.31 ED 2
[27] Church of England Marriages & Banns, Warwickshire County Record Office. Anglican Registers; Roll: Engl 0900090; Ref: DR 409
[28] Coventry Family History Society, *Mary Eaves, Midwife Spon End* (Coventry 2000)

that Murphy is the most common Irish name, the page on which this name is featured was opened. She attended two Murphy households, that of *Timothy Murphy*, Well Street shown in Table A.12.1, and that of *Stephen Murphy*, West Orchard shown in A.12.2.

Timothy Murphy was married twice. It would appear the family left for the United States after 1861 where he died in Massachusetts in 1887.

Similar to Timothy, *Stephen Murphy* married twice. In 1861 he was a widower with Coventry given as birthplace. He remarried in 1863 to Sarah Cooper half his age, and the family presents the classic model of male labouring and female involvement in the textile production. The *Coventry Herald* 4th December 1874 reported that Stephen Murphy, a hawker of West-Orchard, was one of 14 summoned for not sending his two children regularly to school. On his promise to do so the summons was adjourned for 14 days. He died in 1885 while Sarah was located in the workhouse in 1911 having been noted staying with her married daughter Hannah ten years earlier. The family was pursued into the third generation which is shown in Table A.11.3, where Stephen's son can be seen to have been also a Rag Gatherer while Stephen's 3 grandchildren - all Coventrians - found work in cycle assembly.

Table A.12.1 Timothy Murphy Household, H3C16 Well Street 1861

	Rel Head	Mar Con	A M	A F	Occupation	Birthplace
Timothy Murphy	Head	M	40		Farmer	Cork
Mary Murphy	Wife	M		35		Cork
Margaret Murphy	Dau			19	Winder	Cork
John Murphy	Son		9			Coventry
Eliza Murphy	Dau			5		Coventry
Timothy Murphy	Son		1			Coventry
RG9/2206.75.43 ED 4						

Table A.12.2 Stephen Murphy Household, 1871and 5 Grove Street 1881

	Rel Head	Mar Con	A M	A F	Occupation	Birthplace
1861 1 Caldicotts Yard, West Orchard						
Stephen Murphy	Head	Wdr	52		General Dealer	Coventry
Joseph Murphy	Son	M	24		Labourer	Coventry
Jane Murphy	Dau	M		20	Silk Throwster	Coventry
Hannah Murphy	G Dau			6		Coventry
Joseph Murphy	G Son		2			Coventry
1871 H11C9 West Orchard						
Stephen Murphy	Head	M	65		Rag Collector	Wexford
Sarah Murphy	Wife	M		32	Silk Weaver	Coventry
Thomas Murphy	Son		7		Scholar	Coventry
Sarah Murphy	Dau			4		Coventry
Hannah Murphy	Dau			1		Coventry
1881 5 Grove Street						
Stephen Murphy	Head	M	68		Labourer	Ireland
Sarah Murphy	Wife	M		43	Silk winder	Coventry
Thomas Murphy	Son		16		Labourer	Coventry
Sarah Jane Murphy	Dau			14	Cotton Weaver	Coventry
Hannah Murphy	Dau			11	Cotton Weaver	Coventry
Stephen Murphy	Son		9		Scholar	Coventry
Harriett	Dau			4		Coventry
RG9/2206.23.11 ED 2; RG10/3179.25.9 ED 2; RG11/3067.101.5 ED 17						

Table A.12.3 Thomas Murphy Household, H17C8 Well Street 1911

	Rel Head	Mar Con	A M	A F	Occupation	Birthplace
Thomas Murphy	Head	M	45		Rag Collector	Coventry
Mary Ann Murphy	Wife	M		36	Rag Sorter	Nuneaton
Mary Murphy	Dau			18	Cycle Liner	Coventry
Thomas Murphy	Son		16		Gear Case Worker	Coventry
Jane Murphy	Dau			15	Chain Maker	Coventry
Rose Murphy	Dau			9	School	Coventry
Frank Murphy	Son		7		School	Coventry
2 children had died. Also present 1 female, 18 year Cycle worker birthplace Wolverhampton. RG14/18539 ED 1						

Edward Greenhow's investigation into the causes of high instances of diarrhoea.

Edward Greenhow published a report in 1860 on his investigation into the causes of high instances of diarrhoea in British cites. He picked Coventry as one of a number of cities that deserved examination. He sought to discover why diarrhoea was more prevalent in Coventry and went on to state:

> 'A very large proportion of the deaths from diarrhoea in Coventry have been shown to be those of infants under the age of one year…unusually large…Several causes for this were assigned by the medical men, and chiefly, the improper feeding and neglect of infants consequent upon a very large proportion of the mothers being employed in the factory labour, the system of drugging children with Godfrey's cordial, and the habit of procuring medicine from druggists, and of not calling in proper medical aid until a case becomes hopeless. This is said to arise from the circumstance, that any freeman having recourse to the Union surgeon for medical advice is deprived of his vote for a year….Accustomed from girlhood to work in factories, the female operatives of Coventry are often deficient in the housewifely attributes of their sex, and are but bad managers of their infants. Mothers commonly leave their babes when not more than from three to five weeks old to the care of little children or of hireling nurses, and are unable to suckle them oftener than twice between going to the factory in the morning and returning at night. Hurrying home, heated, to breakfast at 8 o'clock a.m., and again at 1 p.m. to dinner, the mother has to nurse her child and get her own food within the brief space of time allowed for these meals. During her absence the child is fed on diet unsuited to its digestive organs, most commonly on bits of bread soaked in warm water sweetened with sugar, more rarely on some kind of farinaceous food. …The system of rearing infants…is, beyond all doubt, a most influential cause of high mortality of children in Coventry: a mortality which no exclusively sanitary improvements will entirely remove.'[29]

Relevant to this report is a what Mr J. Smith of Coventry wrote in the *Lancet* and reported in the *Dublin Medical Press* 26th March 1856: 'In no part of England that I have ever visited…is the Apothecaries' Act so grossly infringed as in the good old city of Coventry…The medical men of this city rank high in the profession, but individually do but little practice, owing to the great number of druggists who practice in every way as general practitioners - visit, prescribe, and dispense, and, without a shadow of a qualification.'

[29] Greenhow, Second Report 1860, pp. 69, 70

Appendix 13

Residential Differentiation; Staple Industries

Hertford Terrace and Hertford Square
Residentially close - socially distant 1880s

Map A.13.1 Hertford Square is in the right background. Hertford Terrace with rear extensions and private back gardens across the foreground.[1]

Figure A.13.1 Hertford Terrace 2016 Part of the terrace still stood in 2016. Its grace in the nineteenth century may be imagined.

[1] © British Library

Figure A.13.2 Hertford Square looking north 1919.

Figure A.13.3 Hertford Square looking south 1954. Arched entrance on right located on Map at Old Half Moon Public House.[2]

It is extraordinarily fortunate that these two photographs, although taken at different times in the 20th century, still exist to provide a 360o view of the Square. The nineteenth century character of the Square is compelling, once the unavoidable anachronistic clutter is ignored.

[2] By permission of Historic England Archive, No: 7063

Table A.13.1 **Occupation of Household Heads** **Hertford Terrace 1881**
Bookseller
Incumbent Of Christ Church Coventry
Grocer & Tea Dealer
Watch Manufacturer
Watch Manufacturer Emp 12 Men & 1App
Dress Maker
Watch Case Maker
Watch & Jewel Manufacturer Emp 7 Men & 4 Boys
Curate in Charge of St Thomas Church Coventry
No Occupation
Wine & Spirit Dealer
Auctioneer & Stock & Share Broker
Annuitant
Charwoman
Wine Merchant
Ribbon Manufacturer
No Occ
No Occ{Son Comm Trav Spice & Drysaltery}
Annuitant
Builder
Draper
Wine Merchant

Table A.13.2 **Occupation of Household Heads** **Hertford Square 1881**
Watch Finisher
Laundress
Watch Case Maker
Watch Finisher
Iron Moulder
Watch Finisher
Laundress
Watch Dial Maker
Watch Finisher
Watch Cap maker
Watch Roller & Lever Maker
Labourer
Watch Cap Maker
Silk Winder
Laundress
Wood Turner
Watch Jeweller
Watch Finisher
Watch Finisher
Watch Finisher
Watch Case Maker
Watch Finisher
Watchmaker
Locomotive Engine Driver

Staple Industries

Watchmaking

Until the nineteenth century the industry remained small with just four manufacturers in Coventry. At the beginning of the century there was an expansion to nearly twenty manufacturers of whom nine were substantial. It was an expansion that continued to prosper particularly from 1825. In 1830 there were at least 53 watchmakers who were sufficiently noteworthy to find their way into West's *Directory of Warwickshire*, of these, at least 20 remained among the 142 listed in 1850.[3] Most watchmakers lived where their workshops were located in Spon Street which was the original trade centre, streets to the south of it towards the Butts, and Spon End. Chapelfields farther west developed as a watchmakers' suburb in the 1840s and Earlsdon later in the century. Apart from the Spon-Chapelfields concentrations to the west, a number of watchmakers resided among workers involved in other trades as far as the vicinity of Gosford Street to the east. Workshops were within watchmakers' houses or were in extensions behind the houses of larger manufacturers. The production of a watch involved much division of specialised labour in many workshops. The watch parts were passed from workshop to workshop until finally assembled by the finisher.[4]

This production arrangement encouraged workshop clustering. However the process could not be described as mass production but more that of a craft industry. In 1851 there were over 2,000 involved in watchmaking with 776 heads of household so engaged. The majority of watchmakers were small craftsmen specialising in a particular area and who employed a small number of apprentices. In 1851 there was a total of 631 workers employed by 21 watchmakers who each employed between 7 and 80 workers.[5] Small masters could take on work from larger manufacturers. No women were employed mainly because of a concern to so do might reduce wages. In 1857 Coventry produced 100,000 watches which represented two thirds of the national output.[6] A large number of apprentices were accepted into the trade; that weavers' sons, at an average of more than 50 annually, were taking up watchmaking in preference to becoming involved in the silk trade indicated that the watchmaking trade was seen to have a brighter future. In the 1830s 48% of all apprentices entered the weaving trade and 28% watchmaking, whereas in the 1850s 54% apprenticed in the watch trade but a mere 20% were becoming weavers.[7]

The demand for watches was more constant than the seasonal requirements of the silk trade. Workers in Coventry regarded watchmaking as the superior trade to which

---

[3] 'The City of Coventry: Crafts and industries', pp. 162-189

[4] In 1891, 15 workers were employed by Joseph Masters and Sons. William who was Joseph's son compiled the following list showing this process:

> 'The first half was done by Mr Richard Aston. The fuzee was cut by Mr Porter, Poddy Croft. Main spring and chain are foreign from Sheffield. Steel dial was made by Mr William Smith, Craven Street and painted by Mr Player, Mount Street. Cast was made by Mr Albert Waterfall, Moat Street. It has sapphire pallets made by Mr Jonathan Keene, Miaddow [Meadow] Street, who also supplied the lever and roller. The escapement was pivoted and pitched by Mr John Adams, York Street, who was a first class workman and also a breeder of canaries. The jewellery was executed and done by Mr Fred Lee of Trafalgar Street. The balance was made by Messrs Smith, Hearsall Lane. Engraving by Mr Tanner, Spon Street. Motion work was done by Mr Sadler, The Butts. The guilding (sic) by Mr William Richards, Norfolk Street. Finishing by Mr Jones, Craven Street. Examined and handled by Mr Joseph Masters, John street. The case was finished by Mr Charles Smith, Little Park Street.'

(Source: Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry)

[5] Searby, Weavers and freemen, p. 47

[6] 'The City of Coventry: Crafts and industries', pp. 162-189

[7] 'The City of Coventry: Social history from 1700', pp. 222-241

weaving was losing ground. Watchmakers were more skilled than weavers and obtained higher wages, on average 25s. per week while apprentices on overtime could reach 7s. The watchmakers' wives did not need to work and occupied themselves rearing their families, unlike weavers' wives who often assisted their husbands. It was acknowledged that a watchmaker earned as much as a husband and wife working together in weaving. The absence of the necessity of wives having to work, that they kept children to school until they were fourteen, and their membership of building societies indicated that they were the working class elite in these flourishing years.[8]

The workshop arrangement produced crafted timepieces but was not suited to mass production of cheap watches. Coventry could not compete with the mass-produced, attractively finished watches from the United States, and with the same country's import duties, nor against the quality but at a lower price of Swiss watches.[9] At its zenith in 1861 the trade employed no fewer than 2,037 persons. Although in decline, the trade was still significant in 1899 with Rotherham's employing 400-500 who produced 100 watches per day.[10]

Bicycle Production

This was responsible for prosperity returning to Coventry and promoting the area to the forefront of modern industry. The Coventry Sewing Machine Company set up in 1863 in order to expand sought to diversify. R.B. Turner its agent in Paris in 1867 noticed a velocipede at the Paris Exhibition and secured an order for the production of 400. In 1869 it renamed as The Coventry Machinists Company; its inventive foreman was James Starley. Shortly afterward he resigned and then in conjunction with William Hillman redesigned and improved the velocipede which was called the 'Ariel' bicycle. This penny-farthing machine was manufactured under licence from 1874. In 1885 Starley's nephew John Kemp Starley designed the 'Rover safety bicycle' which featured two wheels of the same size. With the addition of pneumatic tyres from 1890 this model proved very popular and made it fashionable and possible for women to cycle.[11] Expansion was rapid since little capital was required, small premises could be utilised and the industry was assembly in type. There were according to the *Herald* 100 cycle firms in the city but only six might be described termed large manufacturers in 1894.[12] In the busy season the latter might each employ nearly 1,000 hands each, with the total number engaged in the trade between 10,000 and 13,000. In the slack season the workers were usually placed on short time rather than being let go. Because of the output and number of firms, Coventry though challenged by Birmingham and Wolverhampton, was regarded as the chief cycle manufacturing centre and it had a reputation for supplying a quality product. During 1884 more than 84,000 cycles were manufactured, the majority of which were 'safeties'.[13]

---

[8] Ibid., 222-241

[9] The *Coventry Times* 22nd February 1894 stated:

> 'The prospects of the watch trade do not appear to be encouraging. At present many watchmakers are out of work, whilst large numbers of others are earning a bare pittance. Prices have been cut down so low that it is almost impossible to reduce them further. No trade, perhaps, has felt the general depression which has prevailed throughout the country more than the watch trade. Watches are a "luxury;" people can do without them.'

[10] 'The City of Coventry: Crafts and industries', pp. 162-189

[11] Damien Kimberley, *Coventry's Bicycle Heritage*, (Stroud 2015) pp. 8-10; https://oldbike.wordpress.com/7-bicycles-manufactured-in-coventry/ Accessed 15th January 2019

[12] Brad Beaven & John Griffiths, Urban Elites, Socialists and Notions of Citizenship in an Industrial Boomtown: Coventry, c.1870-1914, *Labour History Review*, Vol. 69, No. 1, April 2004 p. 6 stated the number of workers increased from 400 in 1881 to 4,100 in 1891 and the number of cycle firms increased from 16 in 1881 to 70 by the mid-1890s; 'The City of Coventry: Crafts and industries', pp. 162-189

[13] *Coventry Herald* 19th January 1894

The boom years were not to last; after the boom of 1896 a slump began in 1897. It was said by the *Herald* that the cycle trade of 1899 was the most unsatisfactory in the whole of its history. It noted the abundance of idle time there had been since 1897; how intense demand could quickly tail away, while wages had not been as strong compared to some years ago. 'The remuneration of the unskilled, who form a very large part of the hands, has been steadily diminishing since 1896 till now a large proportion wish they had not entered a cycle factory. In the last year several local factories have been closed or practically so'.[14]

[14] Ibid. 29th December 1899

Appendix 14

Conditions in pre-Famine Ireland

According to Jackson there were small Irish settlements in several English cities such as London, Canterbury, Norwich and York before the eighteenth century. He noted Irish merchants and their families settling in the trade ports of Bristol and Liverpool; some 1,800 manual labourers from Ireland were said to be living in the latter by the seventeenth century. London as the capital city had a strong Irish presence and attracted all tiers of Irish society 'in its kitchens, drawing rooms, legal chambers, banking houses, theatres, newspaper offices, and courts'.[15] O Grada noted that references to seasonal migration to Britain could be found from the eighteenth century.[16] Jackson states 'no single compelling motivation can explain the sudden opening of the floodgates at the end of the eighteenth century'.[17] Irish migration at the beginning of the nineteenth century has been seen as a part of a general Celtic movement that also affected Scotland and Wales.[18]

At its simplest there was in parts of Ireland the push of pervasive poverty, and the pull from an industrialising Britain.[19] Edward Wakefield remarked in 1812 'the poor throughout Connacht live in a state of great wretchedness; oatmeal is a luxury which they seldom taste' and referring to Leitrim he proceeded 'The country around Arigna iron works is inhabited by a people who, according to every appearance are in a most wretched condition. They are badly clothed and reside in dirty mud cabins, continually filled with smoke'.[20] This degraded state of people and the primitive housing according to MacAtasney resulted from 'hundreds of years of confiscation, marginalisation and discrimination [that] had reduced almost the entire populace to the position of non-people in their own country'. By the nineteenth century he continued there was 'a burgeoning population, little or no industry, archaic agricultural techniques and a huge level of landlord absenteeism'.[21] These factors had conspired to bring about a situation where MacAtasney claimed that 'the masses of landless labourers and cottiers felt trapped within an economic system that condemned them to a life of frequent and often perpetual privation and misery'.[22] The system of landholding 'encouraged social division, created poverty and promoted large-scale emigration'.[23] It had created among the peasantry a lack of initiative and induced neglect. Outside of Ulster where 'tenant right' had offered continuity there was no long term security of tenure which did little to incentivise tenants to improve their holdings. They were reluctant to form an attachment with their rented lands held on short leases lest such improvements, while not recompensed, might lead to increased rent demand on lease renewal. While individual landlords may have acted in a praiseworthy manner the temptation for many, who might be absentees, was to act in their own economic interest. This they achieved by lowering costs through converting to less employment-intensive pastoral farming, or allowing subdivision and seeking maximum rents through a middleman.

---

[15] University of Warwick. The London Irish in the Long Eighteenth Century (1680-1830), http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/events/londonirish/ Accessed 22nd January 2019
[16] O Grada, Seasonal Migration in the West of Ireland, p. 49
[17] Jackson, *Irish in Britain*, p. 116
[18] Redford, *Labour Migration*, p. 133
[19] MacRaild, *Irish Migrants*, 1750-1922, pp. 9-30 provides a useful account of the conditions in Ireland before the Famine and the forces at play which prompted emigration.
[20] Gerard MacAtasney, *The Other Famine*, (Dublin 2010) p. 50 quoting J.S. Donnelly, *Captain Rock, The Irish Agrarian Rebellion of 1821-1824*, (Dublin 2009) p. 19
[21] Ibid., p. 220
[22] Ibid., p. 12
[23] MacRaild, *Irish Migrants*, 1750-1922, p. 25

Due to early marriage the population had increased rapidly, according to MacRaild, from approximately three million in 1785 to 6.8 million in 1821 and by just under a million more a decade later.[24] The rate of annual increase at 1.5% until 1821 began to slow to 1.0% in the 1820s but some counties still showed high increases of 20.0% and more over the decade to 1831. These were the poorer counties of Mayo 25.0%, Clare 24.0%, Galway 22.9%, Kerry 21.7% and Roscommon 19.6%. Early marriage had been facilitated by the availability of the potato as a source of food which could be grown in plentiful amounts, on a small amount of land obtained through subdivision. Relying on potatoes, peasants could sustain themselves on a fifth of the land that would be required to supply a grain diet.[25] The increasing acceptance of the potato as a cheap nutritional food and the rapidly growing population, increased competition for land and pressure to fragment land holdings in order to cultivate potatoes. After 1815 with the movement towards pastoral farming, pressure on remaining available land became more intense. There was regional variation in the practice of subdivision but in western counties where a high density of population at 149 per arable sq kilometre it was widespread. The high rent demanded by landowners meant that after the charge was paid there was little left on which to exist, other than the potato crop. In order to have cash available to cover the rent, labourers went abroad seasonally to those areas in Britain where there were not sufficient agricultural workers to bring in the harvest. This was due to an industrialising Britain drawing its own rural workers towards local cities. The migrants became far more numerous in the decades following Waterloo.[26] After 1815, poverty became more noticeable, especially in western areas of Connaught and Munster. Ireland was gripped by an economic downturn with the price of harvested grains falling 50% between 1819 and 1823. Overshadowed by the subsequent Great Famine the seriousness of the famine that occurred in the spring of 1822 has not been sufficiently appreciated[27]. This was due to a failure of the 1821 potato crop after heavy rain which also ruined crops of corn and hay. According to Johnson 'Hunger and want were worst among the poorer inhabitants of Connacht and large parts of west Munster. Around a million individuals came to depend upon government aid during the crisis'.[28] The *Herald* 2nd July 1824 printed a report taken from the *Galway Advertiser* entitled 'Famine in Ireland'. It recounted how a General Luscome visited Oughterard 'and such was the distress and misery which he witnessed there upon his arrival, that he sent an express the same night for a quantity of oatmeal to be immediately sent him to keep the people alive!! – This humane, this excellent gentleman was shocked at the spectacles of human misery which were presented to him; young men laid down upon the bed of misery, unable to move for want of food, and resigned to die'. The newspaper stated that there were 'upwards of two hundred families in one parish…many of whom had not tasted food for the day before'. Added to the distress was social unrest over complaints about tithes, high rents, short leases, tenant evictions and indifferent absentee landlords; grievances which were repressed by the government.

The arrangement where the eldest son inherited a farm further accelerated migrant momentum since the remaining members of small farmers' families, which were the large in size as a result of early marriage, had little local future. Cottiers sowed their

---

[24] Ibid., pp. 15-17
[25] Lees, *Exiles of Erin*, p. 24
[26] O Grada, Seasonal Migration in the West of Ireland, pp. 50, 51
[27] MacAtasney, *Other Famine*, p. 11. He observed that the 1822 famine features on less than one page out of a total of 800 in W.E. Vaughan (ed.), *A New History of Ireland Vol. 5: Ireland under the union 1801-70*, (Oxford 1989).
[28] Nigel Johnston, *Historical commentary for 1822*, National Archives of Ireland, http://www.csorp.nationalarchives.ie/context/Historical%20Commentaries%20for%201822%20-%20with%20hyperlinks.pdf Accessed 8th March 2018

potato crop and crossed the Irish Sea by June seeking supplementary income. They would return in November to save the crop having earned cash for the rent from harvest work in Britain. Johnson observed that while initially this migration helped maintain cottiers on the land, as time progressed, it encouraged more permanent migration, as familiarity by the seasonal harvesters with British surroundings allowed them to engage in non-agricultural activity. Landless labourers without ties to a holding were, according to Johnson, more inclined to develop into semi-permanent migrants who might not return annually to Ireland.[29]

Apart from the condition of the largely subsistent agrarian economy the state of the Irish industrial sector did not assist in the retention of population either. Ó Tuathaigh noted that for years prior to the Great Famine there was 'with significant exceptions the gradual decay of wide areas of Irish industry'. There was unemployment and suffering as the hand-craft textile industries failed to compete with manufactured imports. Redford states this sent into Britain 'a swarm of handloom weavers, of whom the Lancashire and West Scotland cotton districts bore the chief burden'.[30] In April 1830, one hundred weavers left Limerick for Manchester where it was reported that 50,000 looms were fully working, each earning 12s. 6d. per week.[31] The decline of the Dublin silk industry following the Act of Union, which resulted in weavers from Dublin migrating to English silk towns is referred to in Chapter 3. Ó Tuathaigh records that between 1815 and 1840 the number of weavers in Bandon was reduced from 2,000 to 150 while in 1840 Drogheda 1,900 linen weavers on part-time work were surviving with the help of potato patches on the outskirts of the town. He was keen to dispel the common assumption that the removal of tariffs in the years after the Union resulted in Irish industrial decline. He saw decline as the inevitable outcome of the movement from water to steam power and the repositioning of industry in Britain to locations where coal and iron could be sourced. Ireland without a plentiful native coal supply, like parts of Britain, became a peripheral region to these new centres of mechanised industrial activity. Ireland might avail of imported raw materials but the extra cost meant that it could never match the competitive prices realized by highly mechanised British production.[32] The decline of home industry meant that Irish towns could not absorb excess rural population in the way that Britain, with more and larger urbanised centres, could do for its own population. Where a family income was derived from both farming and domestic textile production, that family was at great risk from a simultaneous failure of a crop and the diminishing recompense for home produced textiles.

There was then in pre-Famine Ireland a deep poverty that spurred emigration. It had arisen from a lack of demand, enterprise, and capital, due to rents paid to absentee landlords, and according to Ó Tuathaigh from the 'complicated interplay of population pressure, social structure, availability of cheap food, and changes introduced by market forces in agriculture and change brought about by the industrial revolution'.[33]

---

[29] J.H. Johnson, Harvest Migration from Nineteenth-Century Ireland, *Transaction of the Institute of British Geographers*, No. 41 (Jun., 1967) pp. 98, 99, 110
[30] Redford, *Labour Migration*, p. 153
[31] *Dublin Morning Register* 20th April 1830
[32] Ó'Tuathaigh, *Ireland Before the Famine*, pp. 104-107
[33] Ibid., pp. 124-128

Appendix 15

Attention to and sympathy in Coventry for affairs in Ireland

The *Herald* showing the 'liberal' side of the city was kinder to Ireland. In September 1826 it raised its concern about the state of Ireland asking 'why does she possess, at the best of times, but a bare sufficiency of the most inferior kind of food? And why are her people sunk in ignorance, poverty, and crime? To what can be attributed all her misery and sorrow.' It attributed blame for Ireland's woes to 'the cruel domination exercised by the English. Our yoke has been hard indeed…The Irish are just what we have made them, and yet as they wander bare foot through our country, they are looked upon with scorn and derision for their meanness, and apparent destitution…We should be glad to see a better feeling entertained towards the Irish and would urge [people] to recollect that if an Irishman is in the lowest state of poverty, and if he is more abject, more ignorant, and less moral than themselves, it is the English who have reduced him to that despised and degenerate state'.[1]

The *Herald* 24th June 1831 reported on a mid-day meeting to collect subscriptions for distress in Ireland. It told of a meeting that was 'thinly attended'. The request for the meeting was acceded to by the Mayor Thomas Morris and had been made by James Beck, Joseph Cash, Jonathan Bray and Abraham Herbert, among others. These names suggested it was prompted by those of a 'liberal' motivation. The paper stated the Rev. T.A. Cockshoot attended the meeting. The *Herald* printed in full a letter from Right Rev. Dr. Edmond Ffrench with a Memorial of the Clergy of Galway that was produced at the meeting, as was another from the Rev. Mr. Patrick Fahy, Catholic Curate of Claddagh in Galway, all giving details of the dire condition of the poor in Galway city and county. There was general agreement at the meeting on the extent of the distress in Ireland, but there was discussion as to whether they should enquire into its causes. It was seen by some as difficult to ask for donations without being able to say what was causing the distress. A Mr Johnson said when he saw the Irish pass through England 'he often prayed he might not be like them'. He identified the causes of the destitution - tithes, high rents and absenteeism – which should be known and removed. A Mr Lloyd initially objected to the subscription saying that Parliament should be petitioned about the great distress which he acknowledged existed and without some effort to remove its causes they would again be called on for a subscription. Fr Cockshoot said he was a minister of the gospel, 'the essence of which was charity and he felt called upon to render all the service in his power to relieve the wants and sufferings of the poor'. A collection was made at the meeting and there was agreement that a collection should be taken up at places of worship.

The *Coventry Herald* 7th April 1837 related the findings of George Nicholls, Poor Law Commissioner, regarding the condition of Ireland. He described in a fair-minded way the extreme subdivision of land, and the trickery mendicants could use to evoke sympathy, but resorted to negative cliché in his portrayal of the prevalence of intemperance which he saw as an Irish characteristic, and the apathy of the peasantry who dwelled in dreadful living conditions.

> 'During my progress through the country, it was impossible not to notice the depression of feeling, morally and personally, of the Irish peasantry…It shows itself in their mode of living, in their habitations, in their dress, in the dress of their children, and in their general economy and conduct. They seem to feel no

[1] *Coventry Herald* 1st September 1826

> pride, no emulation --- to be heedless of the present and reckless of the future…Their cabins still continue slovenly, smoky, filthy, almost without furniture or any article of convenience or decency. On entering a cottage, the woman and children are often seated on the floor, surrounded by pigs and poultry, in the midst of filth --- the man lounging at the door. To approach which it is necessary to wade through mud; yet he is too indolent to make a dry approach to his dwelling….His wife is too slatternly to sweep the place in which they live, or remove the dirt and offal, however offensive from the floor.'

He decried their lack of ambition and willingness to excuse their condition because they saw themselves as too poor to do anything about it.

> 'The desultory and idle habits of the Irish peasantry are very remarkable. However urgent the demands upon them…if there be a market to attend, a fair, or a funeral, a horse-race, a fight, or a wedding, all else is neglected or forgotten; they hurry off in search of the excitements and the whiskey which abounds on such occasions.'

This unattractive earlier century depiction of the Irish and their cabins was raised again almost sixty years later for readers of the same paper, illustrating how enduring was the Irish stereotype. On 26th July 1895 there was a feature in the *Coventry Herald* which did the round of all the provincial papers on 'An Irish Mud Cabin'. It was not as judgemental as the earlier piece and seemed to be simply amused by the drollness of the living arrangements, but the impression left on readers of Irish degeneracy must have been the same as earlier:

> 'It consists of two rooms …. There is not a chink in the walls or thatch save a narrow chimney, which seldom if ever answers its purpose; the doorway faces the east and emits the smoke. What little light penetrates inside through the tiny window discloses the deep chocolate stain from the eternal turf-reek which pervades the atmosphere of the interior… the furniture is rough and also scanty, a few stools atoning for the occasional complete absence of chairs. The mud floor is always more or less wet from the patter of the children's bare feet or from the animals which have free access to the house… In the inside room there are two or three box beds or berths, where the children sleep, according to their age and sex; from nine to twelve is not an uncommon number in a family. In the state berth in the calliogh, or recess at the side of the hearth, the father and mother repose unscreened from the livestock on the farm, and breathe the same atmosphere as some eight quadrupeds besides the poultry. Pigs, cattle, dogs, cats, and probably a horse or a donkey have their bed space respectively, and jealously resent any encroachment by a bedfellow.'

Two further descriptions of the peasantry of Ireland found in Coventry newspapers may be appropriately mentioned her.

The *Herald* 15th May 1846 began an article on an 'Irishman's Pig:

> The pig takes his meals with the rest of the family, whom, at best, he regards as his poor relations. He sits down with the circle at the family board (often literally a board for a plate) and eats with them from the same dish…'

The *Standard* 25th June 1847 reprinted from the *Bristol Mirror* what it called a 'Characteristic Anecdote' which commenced:

'A circumstance has this week come to our knowledge strongly illustrating that slothful indifference which characterizes the poorer classes of Irish people…

The *Herald* 15th Sept 1837 wrote a long, sympathetic and persuasive editorial on the Irish question; it showed a keen knowledge of Ireland's predicament:

> 'The old faction which from time to time tyrannized over Ireland, are supremely anxious about retaining that power which they have uniformly abused and exercised exclusively for the maintenance of an unjust and unnatural ascendancy of the few over the many…They would sack and pillage Ireland of the last pig and potatoe of its last wretched peasant, …rather than voluntarily yield to it an equality of civil and religious privileges in common with other portions of the United Kingdom. This…is the true disposition of the Tories towards Ireland…The Liberals would do justice if they could: but being unable, they regret it and pass on…The claims of Ireland, however, cannot be left thus; they will go on to be pressed more forcibly by her own children…the whole system of legislating for Ireland must be changed. Possessing all the natural advantages for creating national greatness and promoting the prosperity and freedom of its population, why is it that Ireland is not "great, glorious and free?" It may be answered, because the mass of the people are ignorant and superstitious, and the whole country torn by religious dissentions. But this is only half the answer to the question….The plain answer is, because the Government of England has uniformly been legislating for Ireland with a view to questions of religion, in order to maintain an unnatural Protestant ascendancy in a Catholic country…the blessings of education have been confined to the small but dominant sect for whose exclusive advantage Ireland has hitherto lived, moved, and had its being. …English Governments, taxing and goading seven-eights of the people under the force of law, for the benefit of the remaining unit, because that unit happens to hold a particular opinion in religion…But the Tories say that although the Protestants of Ireland are a minority, they comprise nineteen-twentieths of the rank, wealth, and intelligence of the country, and that therefore the Government ought still to be conducted with a view to the will of this super-eminently enlightened portion of the Irish community, although they are a minority. We need no stronger argument than this of the Tories…to prove that Ireland has been shamefully misgoverned: for under a just system of Government, no such monstrous state of things could have been brought about…The oppressed and trodden-upon Irish nation has at length turned to demand a restitution of rights. The letter of Mr O'Connell …extracts…given in another part of our paper is highly important and deserving of attention'.

Coventrians were aware from newspapers of O'Connell's powerful exposition of the reasons for the dysfunctional state of Ireland.[2] The *Herald* on the 15th Sept 1837 reported O'Connell saying:

---

[2] The *Dublin Weekly Register* 2nd February 1839 included copy of a letter from Joseph Dickinson in Coventry to T.M. Ray secretary of the Precursor Society stating that a bank order for £1.10s was being sent with a list of subscribers who wished to be enrolled as precursors. It wished the 'true patriots of Ireland, with Daniel O'Connell guiding them, may succeed in their expectations to obtain for their unfortunate country a thorough reform of the numerous abuses under which she has so patiently suffered, to the astonishment of the well-thinking portion of all Europe'. The only relevant Joseph Dickinson in the 1841 census was a 15 year old, local-born, living in Spon Street, however five entries above him was agricultural labourer Michael Callaghan, 35 years, and his 45 years old wife, both old Irish-born. Whether

> 'In England also, we have many and many (sic) friends amongst intelligent and just English men. There are, especially in the great towns and cities, many of the English, who have overcome their nursery prejudices against the Irish, and who look with scorn at the bigotry which, powerless in argument, is strong only in invective and calumny.'[3]

The *Herald* 19th January 1844 reported on the O'Connell trial in Dublin and observed:

> 'There is general impression that a conviction of O'Connell by this Jury is certain. Had all Dublin been picked it is said that twelve men so well disposed to carry out the views of the Crown could hardly have been found. It is remarked that the names of all the Jury are all English.'

In a long editorial in the same edition the newspaper fulminated over the rigging of the jury to try O'Connell and berated 'Tory Justice in Ireland', it asserted:

> 'Never did any British Minister, throughout the long list of all those who have played tyrant over Ireland, sanction or connive at a blacker or more cowardly act than this [by Sir Robert Peel], of packing a Jury of bigots, to try a man of contrary creed. It is a plain and unscrupulous sanction of all the calumnies which have been uttered against Irish Catholics, from the insolent piece of contempt advanced by Lord Lyndhurst, that they were "aliens in blood, in language, and religion." down to the coarse libel that they are a race of people not to be believed upon their oaths… [What is needed is] for common sense to resume its sway, and stepping in between Ministers and the infatuation of their own madness, save a devoted nation from the impending plague of anarchy and horrors, as yet concealed, but which must follow from persisting in that course of galling injustice which now prevails in the administration of Irish affairs. Under any circumstances this prosecution of O'Connell would have fixed a lasting stain upon Sir Robert peel's Administration. The first step towards it,- the proclamation against the Clontarf meeting, was characterised in about equal measure by treachery and cowardice. The subsequent legal proceedings have been at every stage marked by a series of the most discreditable and disgraceful blundering…'

The trial of O'Connell and his imprisonment in 1844 were reported. The subsequent procession of 30 carriages to Richmond prison to present addresses to O'Connell and the holding of meetings in Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh and many Irish towns in his support was relayed. Also recorded was the 'Day of national humiliation and prayer' arranged by the hierarchy of Ireland on his behalf; and the holding of a banquet to celebrate his release in August.[4] The *Herald* 9th February 1844,

---

any of these could have written with such rich adjectival selection is debatable; perhaps the letter was fortified after reaching Dublin.

[3] He continued in a less positive vein:

> 'In the first place, there is a body of active virulent bigotry existing in England, rendered more truculent and more powerful by national antipathy to the Irish. These feelings combine against us a great majority of the agricultural population, and many of the inhabitants of the towns. The second obstacle to the cause of justice to Ireland is to be found in the strength of the Tory minority in the House of Commons – a minority so large and so hostile as very much to embarrass the progress of every measure calculated to be useful to the Irish people. The third and greatest obstacle to obtaining any one measure useful to Ireland, is the house of Lords.'

He then lashed into what he referred to as Orange-Tories.

[4] *Coventry Herald* 16th February 1844, 21st June 1844, 5th July 1844, 27th September 1844

on the back of an article it reprinted from the *Times* berated Peel and the Tory government. The *Times* saw the real ascendancy in Ireland, not as a Protestant but a Catholic one, and continued:

> 'the Romish Church in Ireland is in fact the government of the people…you must get the Romish Church into your own hands; - you must buy up the Priesthood, by becoming their paymasters, and they will become your soldiers in return; and in this way you will draw off the sympathies of the Priesthood from the multitude, and enlist them on the side of the Magistracy and the State'.

The *Herald* chided the Tories for not making the difficulty in Ireland a priority and for its incapacity to manage Ireland. The language and blunt analysis of the sentence which follows, reached after much circumlocution, would evoke the understanding of Coventrians towards Irish matters.

> 'So then, after so many years of wild turbulence, strife, wrong, and insult for Ireland, consummated by the most contemptible and disgraceful State prosecution ever instituted, the land overrun by soldiery, and the people pinioned and gagged the *Times* has at last found out that the notion of "Protestant Ascendancy" in a Catholic country is a bootless enterprise.'[5]

Coventry was aware of the seriousness of the situation in Ireland in 1846. On 11th December the *Herald* noted: 'The accounts from Ireland are of a very distressing kind. The severity of the weather has greatly aggravated the evils of famine, and every day's intelligence records instances of death from starvation'. On 19th March 1847 it told that the accounts from Ireland 'get worse and worse. The mortality in the Southern part of the country is absolutely frightful. It is supposed that not less than 1,000 daily die of famine or fever, or both'. In February a collection with subscriptions in West-Orchard Chapel had raised £43 1s. 10d. while during March a collection was made in Anglican Churches, which with additional subscriptions raised £92 3s. 4d.[6] The *Herald* 12th March 1847 contained a letter to its editor from 'A Citizen':

> 'Sir, I am sure you, in common with the majority of our fellow-townsmen, must regret the small amount collected in so large a City as Coventry, for the distressed

---

[5] The *Herald* was not always sensitive. On 15th December 1848 it published a piece entitled 'Pauper Colonies for Ireland' that reflected on the state of Ireland. It suggested a way to improve the demoralized condition of the country, based on a project of cultivating waste land in Holland and an experiment in organised communal co-operation in Co. Clare. However in its assessment of the situation and its impact on Britain it showed for its part, that the 'deep sympathy for the wrongs and sufferings of the Irish people' expressed by the mayor during O'Connell's visit had lessened. Part of the inelegantly worded, blunt digest which saw the Irish, as culpable for their condition and for debasing the standing of English people, stated:

> 'There is the old ominous prospect of the condition-of Ireland question thrusting all other questions into the background, and hanging like a mill-stone round the neck of parliament in the next Session. Rebels Smith O'Brien and Mitchell were the smallest of Irish difficulties,-the mere scum and froth of the boiling volcano within,-the ferment of semi-savages, blindly warring with fate and famine. A nation of potato eaters, hungry and disorganized,-that is the great fact we have had, and have still, to wrestle with… behold at this day – a land of paupers, rebels and bankrupt landlords. Squatting on the land, and multiplying on cheap food, Irishmen were naturally ignorant, fantastical, and mischievous; and landlords averse to such neighbours as naturally unsympathetic absentees, spending abroad the wealth which should have been employed in developing the resources of their country. It would have been a marvel of marvels, if such a state of things should come to a pleasant ending. Famine has destroyed its millions – hungry and diseased myriads fill the Unions – the Rates swallow up the rents – the burdened estates are sold to capitalists – the remaining squatters are rooted from the soil, and sent upon the highways – the few small farmers, who have a little capital, escape to America,-and a continual tide of mendicancy and disease is poured upon the shores of England, to increase our burdens, and deteriorate still more the sinking, physical, and moral condition of our own working population.'

[6] *Coventry Standard* 12th February and 5th March 1847

> Irish, and I feel satisfied it is only a want of publicity that prevents our ancient City from sustaining her usual character for benevolence. I know of several parties who, having expected a town subscription, have refrained from giving in any other way, and are at this time prepared to subscribe, should such a collection take place. There are few towns in the kingdom more indebted to Ireland than Coventry, as it is one of our best customers, the class of ribbons made in Coventry being more generally used there than in many part of England and Scotland…'

No mention is made of a collection in St. Osburg's to aid the distress but £20 was sent from Coventry to the Association for the Propagation of the Faith in Ireland in October 1847.[7]

The *Standard* showed its insensitivity on 9th April 1847 when it attributed responsibility for the distress of the Famine on the Irish themselves because of their 'heedlessness and indolence'. It said:

> 'Repeal and Famine. – The famine has taught the empire an important lesson as to Irish Repeal. For many years past, that country has been convulsed, and the empire harassed by the loud and threatening demand for the repeal of the union, and the incessant outcry that the Irish people are perfectly equal to the duties of self government, and that all their distresses have been owing to the oppression of the Saxon. The wind of adversity has blown, and where are these menaces now? Had Providence punished them by granting their prayer – had England cut the rope, as Mr Roebuck said, and let them go, where would Ireland have been at the moment? Drifting away on the ocean of starvation. Let this teach them their dependence upon their neighbours, and let another fact open their eyes to what those neighbours are. England has replied to the senseless clamour, the disgraceful ingratitude, by voting ten millions sterling in a single year, to relieve the distresses which the heedlessness and indolence of the Irish had brought upon themselves. We say, advisedly brought upon themselves. For markworthy circumstance! The destruction of the potato crop has been just as complete, and the food of the people has been just as entirely swept away, in the West Highlands of Scotland, as in Ireland, but there has been no grant of public money to Scotland. The cruel Anglo-Saxons have given it all to the discontented, untaxed Gael in the Emerald Isle.

The lack of sympathy shown by the *Standard* for the hardship experienced in Ireland during the Famine years was again shown by it reprinting an article on 15th December 1848 from the *London Times*. On hearing the Union of Westport had received British grants of £133,331 in less than 2½ years, while the Union raised for itself £4,115 in 5½ years, the writer in part exclaimed:

> Is not that enough to knock a man down? The strongest of our readers will stop to take breath after hearing such a statement. Why, who can wonder that the Union of Westport …is already bellowing for more? There is only one possible conclusion from such monstrous demands, viz., that all the inhabitants…have made up their minds not to yoke a horse, or turn a spit of earth, or pull a weed out of the ground, or put a potato in the dry, or stitch a pair of old trousers, or do any business, work, or act whatsoever, except what Dame nature thrusts upon the idlest in spite of themselves, but simply lounge, lie, doze, and snore in confident reliance on that easy old fool, that hard-working old Saxon – Mr. John Bull.'

[7] *Dublin Weekly Nation* 27th November 1847

Ever keen to show the Catholic clergy as hostile, on 7th September 1849 the *Standard* published an article, with it is to be suspected from the final sentence, a certain relish. It said it was revealing 'the charitable views' and 'pulpit eloquence' of 'the Pope's servant' Archbishop John McHale. This was a translation of what a reporter heard the Archbishop to say in the Irish language within the walls of Cong church in 1849. The cleric warned the congregation:

> 'against the wily and crafty assaults of a base and corrupted [Protestant] church – a church begotten and founded by Luther and Calvin – a church cherished and nursed by a brutal force and the lustful desires of Henry VIII and Elizabeth, a wicked church, a cursed church, established on the spoil of the old Catholic church of God… They will give you schools for your children, damnable schools, and then seduce you into their churches…it is a church which has robbed God of His glory. A church that despises His virgin mother… A church which despised the saints; a church which divested the true church of God of its glory, and had only retained the loathsome, filthy carcase, with which they would fain feed the poor deluded souls they were destroying by their heretical doctrine…supported and established by law. He wished the people of the parish would henceforth cease to hold any communication with such a foul institution. They should hold no intercourse with them, they should not speak to them, they should not listen to them, they should not salute them for the future on the highway, their very breath was poison. Now, let us pray the Holy Ghost may come down upon us'.

Following the royal visit to Ireland in August 1849 the same edition of the *Standard* 7th September 1849 commented that the foundations of happiness in Ireland lay first in the protection of its industry and secondly in 'a strong curb imposed upon the ambitious tyranny of Romish priesthood'.

On 10th September 1869 readers of the *Standard* were told about what it called the arrogant demand of Popery. This was shown by what the newspaper said, was the Catholic Church's bigoted attitude in wanting to control education in Ireland. The paper bitterly chastised Cardinal Cullen, who among other remarks, stated he would deprive the sacraments to all parents who sent their children to the mixed Model Schools of Ireland. It declared: 'He is insolent…He insults Protestants. He treats the Civil Power with contempt, as a mere purse-bearer to supply his demands. He condemns the whole current of modern thought, and puts himself forward to stem and arrest its progress.' It continued:

> 'The pretensions of the Roman Catholic hierarchy towards the State are simply intolerable. [Until recently their demands were] meekly asked for, whereas to-day everything is insisted on in haughty language and with supercilious effrontery, and is accompanied with unmistakeable menace…When Cardinals *demand* from a British Government what they dare not open their lips about in Spain, Italy, or Austria, it is high time for British Protestants, even the most *liberal*, to look about them'. [Original italics in last sentence]

Appendix 16

Gatherings, Excitements, Riots

It is to be recognised that disparate incidents over the years, brought together in a list, may suggest a stronger impression of public excitement, irritation or intimidation in the city than normally existed. However they do indicate a tradition of collective sentiment. Prest says there was a mob in Coventry at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[1] The Light Dragoons were called from Coventry barracks to quell food riots in 1800.[2] In 1818 there was a practice called 'donkeying' which occurred again in August 1819 when there was a general strike in the ribbon trade.

> 'Coventry at this time is in a great state of confusion; yesterday several masters rode upon donkies barebacked, for not paying a fair price. Mr. - was one; another for keeping half-pay apprentices, while so many men are out of work. Tuesday (today) it is supposed 1500 people will parade the streets with asses, in order to ride others. People went round the city this morning, to compel all the hands to strike till prices are regulated'.[3]

In 1820 twenty men were imprisoned for 'donkeying'.[4] Violence occurred in the city at parliamentary elections in 1820, 1826 and 1832 and seems to have been condoned and licensed as part of local political custom. A Commons committee found that the magistrates had failed to prevent serious rioting at the 1826 election. Violence in 1832 was sponsored by the Tories who brought many rowdies into the city; there was fierce street fighting at election time on 10th December.[5] On 5th October 1838 a Sergeant of the 7th Hussars was fined by the magistrates for assaulting as policeman; an Officer was similarly charged and fined a few days later. Then on 22nd of the month a series of violent assaults by a number of soldiers was carried out on local police and inhabitants.[6] On 18th April 1821 the execution of 18 years old Edward 'Duckfat' Bradshaw, who was involved in a fatal stabbing, was witnessed by over 15,000 people at Whitley Common[7]. In August 1831 Mary Ann Higgins, aged 19 was hanged for poisoning her uncle, in front of 15,000 spectators at Whitley Common. Thomas Burbury, aged 22, Benjamin Sparkes, aged 20, and Alfred Toogood, aged 17 were all sentenced to death over the burning of Beck's silk factory. In 1832 they were spared on the intercession of Edward Ellice MP but were transported for life. A great concourse gathered round the gaol to witness their departure.[8] A large crowd gathered in 1849 to watch the spectacle of the execution in the heart of Coventry of Mary Ball who had poisoned her husband.[9]

Mention may be made of the case of John Day who introduced a 'picker up' system in the early 1820s. He found that by employing a hand as a picker up, he

---

[1] Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, p. 28
[2] 'The City of Coventry: Social history from 1700', pp. 222-241
[3] Searby, Weavers and freemen, pp. 51-52
[3] *Coventry Standard* 22nd March 1844
The practice of 'donkeying' involved disgruntled workers forcing masters who displeased them to ride on a donkey through the town. Whilst the masters so treated were not physically harmed it must have had an intimidatory effect.
[4] Report on Hand Loom-Weavers, p. 218
[5] 'The City of Coventry: Parliamentary representation', in W.B. Stephens (ed.), *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*, (London 1969) pp. 248-255. URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16032 Accessed 26th January 2019
[6] *Coventry Herald* 2nd November 1838
[7] Ibid. 20th April 1821
[8] Searby, Paternalism p. 221; *Coventry Herald* 13th May 1932
[9] McGrory, *Coventry*, pp. 235, 236

speeded up his weaving and saved a quarter on his outgoings. In applying this division of labour to his ten looms and employing females, and for a variety of other reasons, he encountered opposition from weavers. They believed that a new productive system which led to greater output by fewer hands was evil, and a campaign began against him. In 1830 he wrote:

> 'your memorialists are absolutely fearful of their lives, as well as those of their children. The violence has been carried on now for twelve months, and it is not only against them and their family, but also against the persons in their employ; in the month of May last, a mob assembled in the street in which your memorialists reside, and waylaid their work-people, and so shamefully did they behave, that one of them, viz. Anna Maria Boydell ... never recovered, nor ever did a day's work after, but lingered in great pain and agony, till the 13th of November last, and then died, from the bruises she received; ... but this is not a tenth of the injuries your memorialists have been, and are subject to, - all manner of missiles and filth are constantly being dashed on and against their premises; but this your memorialists would not have noticed, had it not been for a more diabolical act committed on Thursday right last, ... a train of gunpowder laid in an alcove situate in your memorialists, garden, behind their house, and which was set fire to, about 9 o'clock - the concussion did infinite damage to the said alcove, and absolutely shook the foundations of the buildings in the surrounding neighbourhood!!!'[10]

A Mr Farrington moved from London and set up as a manufacturer in Coventry where he refused to pay by the list. In 1822 Thomas Parker, Mary Smart and her husband reluctantly stopped working for him due to threatening visits at night from the weavers' committee. Due to such persuasion all Farrington's weavers abandoned him.[11] In 1832 John Hall outlined how he wished to introduce an expensive upgraded rack and pinion power loom that would produce improved quality ribbons and save one third on labour costs. However he did not introduce them because 'we feared that they would have been destroyed, and our persons insulted'. He continued 'I have known my late partner, within the last twelve months, go into Coventry at night and compelled to leave the town before daylight in the morning; when a reduced price for weaving is proposed, they insult all the masters who first sign it'. In the end he closed his Coventry workshop.[12] This threatening behaviour was not confined to the Luddite period earlier in the century. Prest recounts that during the 1858 dispute some workers who had gone back to work during the strike were dragged out of Mr Day's factory. Again in 1858, workers for Mr Pridmore, the only manufacturer out of six who would not sign an agreement were attacked as they left work in the evening by a strong force of 1,000 outdoor weavers. 'The blacklegs were attacked, the constable was knocked unconscious, and the windows of the factory were smashed. Feelings continued to run high for some time after this riot'.[13] It was reported that 'several persons in the employ of Mr Hart, who complained that they were subjected to serious annoyance when they left work, [were] being followed by a large crowd, who always insulted and sometimes attacked them…There were many persons willing to enter Mr Hart's employ, but such was the system of intimidation that prevailed, that they did not dare to do so'.[14]

---

[10] Searby, Weavers and freemen, pp. 114, 115. Original underlining.
[11] Ibid., pp. 55, 56
[12] Report on the Silk Trade, pp. 377, 378
[13] Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, pp. 116-118
[14] *Coventry Herald* 27th May 1859

Appendix 17

Study Area parameters

Considerations on the extraction of information from the census manuscript pages.

Deciphering faint and illegible entries, on occasions when they occur, causes difficulty. Generally there is a lack of uniformity to contend with in the style of entries provided across the enumeration books of a Registration District, and between the books of one census and another. The same person's name may be spelled differently over a number of censuses (See Table A.17.1). The enumerators' books before 1911 were not primary sources; in the transcription from Householders Schedule an Irish-born could be marked erroneously in a manuscript page within a long list of Coventry-born as also Coventry-born. The error might only become apparent if interest in an individual raises enquiry in an earlier or later census. The fact that electronic co-relation, albeit on an individual entry basis, is possible between censuses is a particular boon in confirming that an entry has been made erroneously or where a birthplace has been left unstated or entered as 'not known' in a particular census.

In some cases an ageing widowed parent might be given primary position on a household listing, perhaps a courteous honouring of age, while the economic importance of the household centred on the grown-up children. In other cases the same kind of parent might be relegated to the end of a household listing with headship conferred on a grown-up child. Difficulty may arise in relating grandchildren of a head, to specific unmarried daughters listed under the head. In censuses after 1841 a same-surnamed listing of members, extra to the head family, may be referred to as lodgers in one census, and in words implying kin in another, without obvious reasons for such alteration. If the person in question was described as lodger but had the same surname as the household head, then 'kin' was chosen to denote the relationship. Similarly, a differently named widowed lodger to the head, may turn up described as a visitor in one census and in the next as a boarder, while all the while it is more than likely she was actually kin. The usage of the word visitor, as for lodger, may not have portrayed the whole truth. Some visitors might be more appropriately labelled as kin, while some, who appeared to be lodgers, were dubiously titled as visitors. The usual understood meaning of visitor, which is that of a person staying short-term socially as a guest, may not have applied in reality. Mary Rafter was a Cork-born widow visiting cordwainer John Elliot, and his wife Rose, in Gray Friars Lane in 1851. However she was not a transient visitor to Coventry as she was resident in the city with her then husband and two children ten years earlier. Again Irish-born James Kauns a dealer in clothes in Greyfriars Lane, had three differently named Irish-born visitors in residence on census night 1851: Visitors: James Davis, unmarried, hawker; Catherine Dunfield, marrried, cap maker; Rosehanna Carney, married, hawker. All this was perhaps to downplay the number of occupants, any excess of which might attract the attention of the Nuisance Inspector. *The Coventry Herald* 30th December 1853 outlined how PC Deeming reported that Charles O'Donnell, was charged with keeping an unregistered lodging house in Chauntry Place. Deeming said he was kept at the door for ten minutes before being let in and was told the occupants were O'Donnell's mother, brothers and sister. 'If there had been twenty more, these Irish would own them all as relations' Deeming remarked while adding the house was completely unsuited as a lodging house.

The absence of any response on occupation may also not convey reality. In 1871 Bridget Burke (See Table 3.2) does not record an occupation and is merely presented as the wife of labourer Patrick Caulfield. However she appears to have been long involved in dealing; she was a dealer in clothes in 1861 and a marine store dealer in 1881. Between one census and another, responses to the question on occupation might be

given with a different wording by a person in the same type of occupation. The question arose as to whether they might be telling of the same job, or in the nuance could be showing adaptability or change in occupational status. Vanity could cause some to grandly title their occupational status. Older folk might represent themselves in their occupation from earlier years. In 1881, e.g. Irish-born 80 year old John Lee of H14C1 Spon End referred to himself as a general labourer, but he was outdone by John Brookes of H4C4 St. John Street who at 90 years also referred to himself as a labourer. The lack of occupational detail e.g. as to whether weaving referred to domestic or factory work, or how secure or seasonal employment was, when weaver or winder were mentioned, can also invite speculation.

Household in the census is an administrative concept. It refers to the number of people present in the house which a household head so declared on census night. A census household does not necessarily conform to a biological family and is best understood as a co-residing group. Such a nineteenth century urban household could be numerically large or complex and in cases needed deliberation as to how best to interpret its internal relationships. The size and complexity arose as a result of: the high birth rate of the time; the rapid urban migration to a relatively fixed stock of dwellings that creating overcrowding in households; the practice of sub-letting due to poverty; the absence of state sponsored social security or personal pensions for the elderly which forced many to live with their offspring; the system of domestic weaving and watch making workshops in houses drawing apprentices to live with the household family; and the popularity of domestic service. The kind of cohesion and social interaction which a household engaged in can never be fully understood, when researched at the distance of a century and a half.

The majority of households found in the census were those whose members were linked by marriage, or biologically to household heads. These may be considered standard households. Households taking lodgers were treated within the standard household model. This allowed the lodging Irish to be analysed in tandem with head families and thus avoided the production, in many situations, of a separate set of findings on lodging that might leave an appearance that lodging was an exclusive activity disconnected from the general undertakings of migrants. Some households had elevated numbers of lodgers and it may have been in reality a situation where a family ran a business taking in lodgers. However if there was a household feel to the arrangement, and depending on the circumstances, and the desire to include as many households as possible within the databases, they were treated as if they were standard. There were institutions, e.g. workhouse, or army barracks that were large enough (over 100 occupants) to warrant a special enumeration book of their own. However there were also among the body of households, non-standard households e.g. convents, schools, inns, and police station, that were quasi-institutional in aspect. Some of these contained an Irish head (and probably a family) whose details were first recorded for the household, before details of the students, inmates, soldiers, or prisoners as was pertinent, commenced. If these non-standard households were to be analysed separately as institutions, the head's family element of such would be excluded during analysis of the characteristics of head's families as a group. On the other hand they could not be easily plucked out in database handling from the 'institution' in which they were embodied. It was felt the most appropriate solution was to exclude non-standard household Irishcom from household analysis and list their extent in 'Institutions' in Appendix 7.

Defining the study Area

The area was required to encompass the city of Coventry and to be an unchanging common area on which census data could be assembled for seven censuses, thereby

allowing intercensal contrast. It was not possible to use the municipally bounded area as an off-the-peg solution.

The Municipal boundary

Accepting a municipal boundary i.e that of 1842, to spatially define the study area would exclude Whitmore Park, Pinley, Whitley, Caludon and Radford. To the north of the city the Red Lane locality outside the municipal boundary of the city, but contiguous to the administrative area, which had census data collected for it as part of the Coventry Superintendent Registration District, would have to be excluded. The Red Lane locality was a detached part of St. Michael's Parish. A similar situation existed for the surroundings of Caludon another detached part of St. Michael's Parish that was not contiguous with the Municipal city administrative area.

The municipal boundary to the south of 1842, essentially marked out by the east-west running London and North Western Railway line, was not established in the 1841 census and there is no co-incidence between it and boundaries of local EAs in 1841. Thus for that year the EAs 23 and 30 (shown in Map 5.1) run from the built-up area out into the countryside, to the edge of the parish at Stivichall.

The municipal boundary although present from 1842 was not fully employed to the south as a Coventry city census aggregated area boundary line in 1851, or in 1861, with EA 37 of the latter, shown in Map 5.6 falling both inside and outside the municipal boundary.

Coventry Registration District

The administrative area extent of Coventry Registration District is larger than Municipal Borough area; it contains the contiguous built-up area, the surrounding common lands and farmlands, and outlying village of Radford. It is the Registration District area that forms the basis of the Study Area for this investigation, since its constancy of area over a long term, with national standard recognition, better facilitates ongoing intercensal comparison. Although few Irish were to be found beyond the urban nucleus, the fact that a small number were discovered at the periphery made the selection of the Registration District worthwhile.

Fortunately later significant Coventry municipal boundary expansion occurred towards the end of the period of study review, and the working boundary of this investigation did not for most censuses under-circumscribe the functional, dynamic extent of the built-up urban area. See Maps 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3.

Enumeration Areas

The EAs for Coventry, as indeed for much of elsewhere were not shown on any maps or plans, so it was a first requirement that the EAs be mapped. The enumerators provided at the beginning of each of their books, a description of the street routes they followed rather than the boundary of their enumeration districts, so it was difficult in places to delineate the EAs. Some of the descriptions were comprehensive others were quite short and left room for confusion, e.g. they would mention as a local landmark the name of a public house or farmhouse that had long gone. If in places the boundary between two districts was not clear from the enumerator's description of his route, and not suggested by a parish boundary line, river, old wall of city line, or landmark, then on the EAs map that was being created, it was then found necessary to make an educated guess and draw a straight line to establish the enumeration district boundary. Tracts of open land in which isolated dwellings were located were obviously more pronounced around the edge of the city. The enumerators walked down lanes, traversed over uninhabited farmland, park land, common land and heaths as they moved from

farmhouse to farmhouse counting occupants. This point to point enumeration did not make obvious the circumscribing edge of the area they were actually enumerating.

In the mapping now, of that linear style enumeration procedure, in order to give a visual and tangible boundary to each EA and to avoid leaving uninhabited areas just mentioned appearing as 'vacuums', particular EAs are drawn extended towards each other or towards the administrative area boundary. Thus peripheral EAs while large in extent as drawn, may in fact be far less populated than the compacted centre city districts. To locate streets and lanes, further help was obtained from the Board of Health Map of Coventry 1851, 'Taunton's Map of the city of Coventry 1869' and the superb OS Map of 1888 Scale 1:500.

The emphasis is on analysis of EAs rather than on streets and lanes. A listing of streets ranked to show the numbers of Irish has poor comparative value, given the varying length of streets and the presence of yards, buildings and multiple courts behind certain streets. For example the lengthy Spon Street had 48 Courts leading off it. An Irish cluster which on first mention may have been associated with an individual street, may in reality have functioned around a number of close-by streets. In EA map inspection it should be remembered that streets varied in length and could be found in more than one EA. Again, one side of a street may be in one EA and the other side in a different EA. Enumeration enclosures were simply areas of aggregation and in a compact city were not 'on the ground' socio-economic spatial delineations.

Mapping residential differentiation

The features of any street: its length and width, when and where it was built, the house type and the occupation of its residents can be sufficient to provide a rounded judgement of its character. To move beyond the area taken up by a street and to seek to establish socio-economic status for the areal size of an EA, or larger, becomes more problematic. If such information was available, it would make for a better assessment of the standing of the Irish persons found in different districts. Previous to mid-century there were some areas that were distinctive - Butts, Chapelfields, Hillfields and the vicinity of Greyfriars Green. The topshop arrangement where workers lived underneath their workplace and the largely unregulated placing of industrial buildings within residential areas had also created residential clusters of similarly employed workers. However this clustering was not absolute and while broadly speaking weavers lived towards the east and watchmakers to the west there was overlap with workers residing in each other's industrial domains. Sharp differentiation of social areas for the whole city is not achievable for much of the century, as segregation by social areas had not matured. The proximity of Hertford Terrace, and Hertford Square (Appendix 13) both enumerated in EA 33 Map 6.1 for 1881 showed that in the city people could be residentially close but according to type of residence and occupation socially distant.

Such residential differentiation had not been properly established nationally, except for the extremes of rich and poor, before the end of the century.[1] The compact nature of Coventry meant that the central city population resided intensively among a dense jumble of buildings and with the growth of the cycle industry, the mish-mash of houses and workshops intensified further. In this closely populated city isolating areas occupied by those of similar socio-economic standing is not easily achieved since merchants lived on major streets while those of lesser status occupied courts just behind. Dennis had observed for towns such as Merthyr Tydfil that due to eighteenth century infilling of the gardens of merchants' houses there appeared to exist a front street and back yard contrast between rich and poor.[2]

[1] Carter, Towns and urban systems 1730-1914, p. 41

[2] R. Dennis, The Social Geography of Towns and Cities 1730-1914, in R.A. Dodgshon & R.A. Butlin (eds.), *An Historical Geography of England and Wales*, (London 1990) p. 442

A prominent street did not necessarily mean its courts were of good quality or that its court residents were held in high social esteem. Some courts had substantial numbers of houses with many occupants that were in lower socio-economic classes, which in any reckoning would distort the established reputation of the street that fronted them. There were also individual centre city down-at-heel secondary streets or lanes where the occupants of the front houses (particularly if they lodged above public houses or commercial premises) were no more exalted than those in the courts behind them. [3]

It may not be appropriate in any analysis of social situation for nineteenth century Coventry, to strongly differentiate the city on the basis of 'inner areas' or 'outer areas'. The former would be envisaged as offering affordable accommodation will little salubrious frills, while the latter as having lower densities, better designed housing that was built according to regulation, less industrial intrusion and a healthier aspect. Residence in these areas or movement to them would be interpreted as an expression of social standing, or upward mobility. This binary view is not entirely satisfactory because even in the 'inner areas' there were streets, such as Priory Row that were select. In terms of the Irish it may be tempting to seek to see a clustered 'type' of Irish in the city centre and a more dispersed 'type' of Irish beyond. An expectation that status or advance would express itself in residence or movement outwards may not be true for Irish circumstances. Those with the potential to so do, such as lodging house keepers, licensed victuallers, shopkeepers, shoemakers, tailors and hawkers, may have been reluctant to move since being centrally placed in the city was essential for the conduct of business. Proximity to employment must have been a factor in the selection of the central area for residence, where into the early twentieth century industrial activity was located. Further, there was some movement towards the weaving suburb of Hillfields by Irish weavers from the 1850s, and later in the century Irish-born could be found outside the city core, but they were respectively renters or lodgers with an uncertain long-term commitment to any area. There are reservations about such zonation when applied to any city that is not areally expansive. This imagining of the suburb is more of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which grew through the availability of commuting facilities. Apart from areas already noted as distinguishable at the edge, and e.g the high status St. Nicholas Street or Warwick Road, for much of the nineteenth century outward development was contained, with a fairly abrupt transition from urban to rural. One end of Much Park Street - not an unusually long street, was in the city centre while the other end for much of the century was at the edge of the built area. Due to the city's compact nature much of the Coventry suburb was close physically and socially to the city centre. From mid-century onward suburban roll outward in the north and east still had an urban, proletarian feel (Earlsdon to the south west did have a suburban aspect). Best observed that the Victorian suburb 'still had a strong flavour of the city'; this appears the case in Coventry.[4]

The condition and social status of streets towards the edge of the city should be ascertained before considering that movement of a family towards the edge of the city

---

[3] The court/front house arrangement cannot be distinguished in the census until 1861. Prior to that, households in an enumeration district were recorded in numerical order. As the enumerator proceeded along a street, seldom was an indication provided that the individual courts behind the street front had been entered for enumeration. The idea of matching family names in 1861 with names in 1851 in order to relate the known location in 1861 to a decade earlier is not feasible due to the transience that existed. Sadly the Board of Health Map for 1851 and the superbly detailed Town of Coventry 1:500 of 1888 (featured in Chapter 3) which might have been suitable aides to precisely locate households disclosed in the censuses did not number dwellings either. Fortunately the Town of Coventry Plan provided courtyard numbers so from them the general direction of street numbers can be ascertained. The fire insurance plans published by Charles E Goad in 1897 at 1:480 though not comprehensively covering the city, in the areas they did map, offer a wealth of detail and crucial house numbering. Map 2.4 features the Goad plan for Palmer Lane.

[4] Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain 1851-75*, p .16

gestured social advance. A street built in the 1820s at the edge, or suburb, of the compact city might still be positioned towards the edge of the built-up city area a half-century later. However as in the district of Thomas Street (Figure 2.2), Moat Street, and Butts, its housing stock which would have been fresh at time of development might have over the years become run-down and overcrowded. A move 'outwards' then to an area in that condition towards the edge of the city may not have been a sign of increased affluence.[5] In the case of Thomas Hennessey (Appendix 2) his move outward sometime after 1896, from Well Street where he conducted business for many years, to the solidly built Ellys Road, was not the consequence of social advance, but simply appears to have been due to his moving in with his daughter and son in-law already resident on the Road, after he retired.

A serious discrepancy

A serious discrepancy appears to exist when the trend of the decennial totals is perused. The area in 1851 and 1861 for which Abstract figures are provided is the same size as the Study Area i.e. ED 400. While the Irish-born Abstract and Study figures generally match over the decades this did not occur for 1851 and for 1861. The 698 Irish-born shown in the Abstract for Coventry in 1851 represented 1.89% of a total population of 36,812. The study harvested for the same area, 892 Irish-born which represented 2.42% of the population. This higher Irish-born figure relative to 1841, appears much more in line with the sharp upward nationwide trend in the years following the Famine. Chinn also identified a discrepancy for Birmingham of over 1,300 Irish-born between the 1851 printed tabulation of 9,341 and his figure of 7,981 which he says was arrived at by his 'scouring' the census. His finding serves to further suggest that for 1851 the Printed Table total for Irish-born in Coventry is an aberration.[6] For 1861, the 704 Irish-born shown in the Abstract for Coventry represented 1.69% of a total population of 41,647. This study concluded that for the same area covered, 795 Irish-born could be distinguished which represented 1.90% of the population.

There is an upward trend in the total population with the exception of 1871. The decline of Coventry population in 1871 in the amount of 3,977 is widely attributed to people leaving the distressed city in the 1860s. However, all but 1,534 of the decline was due to the exclusion by the publishers of the census of four edge of city enumeration districts in order to present Abstract figures coinciding with the municipal administrative area. No such exclusion occurred for the constantly sized Study Area so the dip in the centurial profile of the total population is less evident.

Published Tables and Census Enumeration Books

While the data for the specific focus of this study comes directly from the pages of enumerators' books and is not dependent on published Census Tables, nevertheless reference to the information on Irish-born in the published tables is important in confirming this study's totals. Reference to these Tables is also important for displaying Coventry's total population attributes, and in order to provide comparative information on other cities.

However the printed abstracts are a thin resource. The country of birth was first recorded in 1841. It is only in the 'Country of Birth Tables' that Irish-born in Coventry are distinguished and then only by male/female totals. The 1851,[7] 1861[8] and 1871[9]

[5] A similar observation might be made about Hillfields as the century wore on.
[6] Chinn, 'Sturdy Catholic emigrants', p. 58
[7] 1851: PP 1852-3, Vol. 88, Part 1 p. 880. Principal towns: same as District.
[8] 1861: PP 1863, Vol. 53, Part 2 p. 532. Principal towns: same as District.
[9] 1871: PP 1873, Vol. 71 Part 1 p. 342. Birthplace by principal town, municipal limits only.

censuses did provide an 'under 20 years/20 years and upwards' breakdown. The 1881 census provided no Irish-born total for Coventry since the Tables did not supply information on Urban Sanitary Districts with less than 50,000 population as was the case with Coventry. It was not until 1911 that a detailed Irish-born age breakdown at borough level appeared.[10]

Census coverage 1841

Table 27 'Warwickshire' in the printed Volumes of 1851 and 1861 and Table 4 (PP 1872, Vol. 66, p. 317) of 1871 provide in adjacent columns population details from 1801 onwards. For 1841 a total population of 31,032 is shown. However the Summary Tables for 1841 Census (PP 1843, Vol. 23, pp. 330-331) refer to Coventry City with a total population of 30,743 and noting within this figure 555 (330 m/225 f) were born in Ireland. The significance is that against this figure of 30,743 alone is Birthplace information, i.e. the Irish-born total, shown. It is interesting to note that this study found 251 persons in (Radford Hamlet) and 38 persons in (Red Lane and Caludon) which when added together make for exact difference between 31,032 and 30,743*. Thus for 1841 there appeared to be a need to trim off the total figure, the two EAs that could be distinctly recognised as outside the Municipal boundary drawn in 1842.

*To add confusion: The Summary Table footnote 'd' states that Radford Hamlet was included in the City Return.

Census coverage 1851 and 1861

In 1851 the census nationally, collected and published data in base geographical units called Superintendent Registrar's Districts. They corresponded with Poor Law Union areas. 'Superintendent Registrar's District 400 - Coventry' consisted of two Subdistricts each largely embracing part of a parish. The first was that of St. John embracing the parish of St. Michael with St. John. Keresley Hamlet which was part of St. Michael's Parish was enumerated in District 399 Foleshill. The second was the Parish of Holy Trinity. Parts of this parish were in District 396 Meriden and District 399 Foleshill (Willenhall Hamlet). The Manors of Whitley and Pinley were included in St. Michael Parish. Radford Hamlet close to urban Coventry was mentioned separately and its population figure provided, but was included in the Holy Trinity Subdistrict. It is on this District 400 area that the breakdown into Birthplace is published, thus revealing the number of Irish-born for 1851. The same arrangement held for 1861. For both censuses in the Table headed 'Birthplace of those in Principal Towns – Coventry', totals for 1851 and 1861 and associated Irish-born figures were presented which matched the District 400 results.[11]

Census coverage 1871

In 1871 the Registrar's District 393 (PP 1872, Vol. 66 Pt 2 p. 317) enumerated the same area as District 400 had done previously and counted 40,113. However the figure of 486 Irish-born was for the first occasion only published for Coventry Municipal area which had a total population of 37,670. In order to reach this figure, four peripheral enumeration districts in District 393 (Whitley/Pinley), (Red Lane), (Earlsdon) and (Radford) were defined as 'without' the City and were excluded, thereby reducing the District 393 population total of 40,113 to 37,670.

[10] Census of England and Wales 1911,Vol. 9, Birthplaces p. 266

[11] Census 1851, Population Tables II, Vol. 1, Division VI, Birthplaces of the People, pp. 525, 526; Census 1861, Vol. II, Part 2, Table 22, Birthplaces of the People, pp. 529, 532. See www.histpop.org.

Census 1881 and Census 1891

Both covered Coventry as Registrar's District 392. (Some 1881 enumeration books appear to be labelled 393 in error.) Irish-born figures were not supplied in the census abstracts for the Urban Sanitary District of Coventry in 1881 as they were not supplied for such Districts that contained a population of less than 50,000.[12]

Census 1901

Covered by Registrar's District 392.

The 1890 expansion of the municipal borough to the west into Earlsdon and north to Red Lane, fell within the extent of the Registration District synonymous with this study area, so compatible areal figures are maintained from 1841 to 1891. However the Registration District for the 1901 census was areally larger than those previous, as it accommodated the municipal borough inclusion in 1900 of Stoke in the east and Foleshill (part of) in the north east. The effect was to add 7 districts where 8,539 were enumerated and which contained 63 Irishcom of whom 22 were Irish-born. The enumeration districts in Foleshill and Stoke for 1891 that covered the area encroached on by the municipal expansion of 1900, when inspected revealed but two Irish-born and 4 Irishcom. One of these Irish-born could not be identified in 1901 census, while the second Irish-born and 2 of the 4 co-relating Irishcom had left to reside in Lancashire by 1901. Given then that there was no donation of Irish from the added area to the 1901 Registration District, the data for the reshaped Registration District is supplied alongside that of previous censuses.

The St. Michael Detached area covering the countryside of Caludon was enumerated in Foleshill Registration District from 1891(Caludon in 1901 had a population of 12 and no Irish). In 1901 the number of Irish-born was provided for Coventry only at City Borough level (Pop: 69,978) in the census abstracts and was recorded at 416. This study discovered all of these Irish-born and 1 further Irish-born in Whitley, located in the Rural District of St. Michael Without, making for a total of 417 Irish-born in the Coventry Registration District (Pop: 70,296) whose area coincides with this study in 1901. The total of Registration District Irish in 1901 in the area that corresponded to the 1891 Registration District was Irish-born 395 and Irishcom 799.[13]

Census 1911

Covered by Registrar's District 390.

Relevant information sought by the censuses.

Census 6th June 1841: Name; Not asked was the relationship to head or marital status; Age rounded down to nearest 5 years if person over 15 years old; Gender indicated by column in which age is entered; Occupation; Birthplace - one response from these two questions: 'born in the same county' Y or N, or 'born in Scotland, Ireland or Foreign Parts' S, I, F. Though there is delight that this pre-Famine census provided for the first time information on Irish-born, its usefulness, as it relates to this study, is limited. There is no information on the relationship of members of a household to each other, or their marital status, or county of birth in Ireland.

Census 30th March 1851: Name; Relationship to the head of the family; Marital status; Age at last birthday; Gender indicated by column in which age is entered; Occupation; and Birthplace. The street name was sought but not the house number.

---

[12] Census 1891, Vol. III, Division VI, West-Midland, Table 8, Birthplaces, p. 275. See www.histpop.org

[13] RG 12/2446.42.1ED 3; RG12/2448.46.10; RG13/3449.212.21 ED 21; Census 1901 County of Warwick Table 36 p 69.

Census 7th April 1861: As for 1851 with house number required.

Census 2nd April 1871 & Census 3rd April 1881: as for 1861.

Census 5th April 1891: As for previous with the following sought: Employer/Employed /Neither Employer or Employee.

Census 31st March 1901: As for 1881 with change of previous column to: Employer/Worker/Own account.

Census 2nd April 1911: As for 1901 with marriage details, including the number of children ever born, required; nationality sought.

Table A.17.1 The name Michael Monehan appearing under a variety of spellings in Coventry 1861-1901. Also showing the census 'degrade' of his family.

Name	Rel to Head	Mar Con	Age M	Age F	Occupation	Birth place
1861: Greyfriars Lane						
Michael Monehan	Head	M	45		Labourer	Galway
Mary Monehan[14]	Wife	M		36		Galway
Mary Monehan	Dau	U		13		Coventry
Edward Monehan	Son	U	7			Coventry
Catherine Monehan	Dau	U		7		Coventry
Michael Monehan	Son	U	5			Coventry
Mark Monehan	Son	U	2			Coventry
1871: 14 Greyfriars Lane						
Michael Monichan	Head	M	53		Shoemaker	Ireland
Mary Monichan	Wife	M		47		Ireland
Catherine Monichan	Dau	U		15	Cotton weaver	Coventry
Mark Monichan	Son		13		Scholar	Coventry
1881: 11 Ironmonger Row						
William Monaghan	Boarder	Wdr	59		Shoemaker	Ireland
1891: H9C4 Palmer Lane						
Michael Monagan	Boarder	Wdr	60		Shoemaker	Galloway
1901: Workhouse						
Michael Monaghan	Pauper	Wdr	76		Gen labourer R	Ireland
RG9/2203.3.1 ED 17; RG10/3176.16.1 ED 13; RG11/3072.27.12 ED 9; RG12/2453.30.6 ED 7; RG13/2908.139.1 ED Workhouse. Michael was long-lived and died between Jul and Sept 1910 at 95 years. Civil Registration Death Index: Warwickshire, 6d p. 225.						

[14] A report in the *Coventry Standard* 17th May 1862 may have referred to Mary: 'Disorderly Irish Woman'- An Irish woman, name Mary Moniken, brought up an charged with being disorderly on the burges, on Monday night, was cautioned and released.

Points of concern listed by Pooley

1. That research on large centres provided an incomplete picture of urban response. He sought a more precise assessment of Irish impact on British towns, noting beyond the headline cities of London, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Bradford, Leeds and Newcastle the Irish were found in much smaller and surprising places such Durham, Chester, Carlisle, York, Macclesfield and southern towns such as Winchester and Colchester. They comprised 4.0% or more of the population, and in percentage terms were just as influential in these towns as in the large cites.

2. He saw over-emphasis on the majority with a minority of significance obscured. Research while not giving a false view, had been based too readily, on the experiences of social segregation undergone by poor Catholic migrants concentrated in large industrial cities. While acknowledged in studies to exist, the behaviour of the remaining minority was ignored. Pooley maintained this Irish minority obtained skilled jobs which brought them responsibility, status and financial gain.

3. Emphasis on the majority had led to an over concern with the clusters of Irish and to the neglect of the Irish in the wider town area. There was a substantial minority that was scattered over the urban area, and given but cursory acknowledgement, as the studies emphasised clustering. This minority which contained those with a higher socioeconomic standing, or residing in suburban areas, was as much part of the Irish experience in Britain, as that, understandably described, in studies stressing the conditions of an impoverished and clustered majority.[15]

4. He observed that a long standing methodological approach of most studies was to set out to emphasise segregation, and questioned how the occurrence of segregation was being recognised. Segregation could be defined as a specific number of Irish in a given area, but such a statistical measure may not be regarded as satisfactory as segregation may be better defined by its impact and effects on the segregated population. In that case, segregation could apply to a group of migrants whether seen as residentially concentrated or widely scattered. He stated, 'any attempt to measure segregation objectively is itself illusory as the spatial framework within which measurement takes place will fundamentally affect the outcome. It is thus suggested that depending on the spatial units used and the definition of segregation adopted, almost any town could be shown to have a highly clustered or a widely dispersed distribution or Irish migrants'.[16]

[15] He raised as an example Lees concentration on five localities where Irish residence was intensive; she having stated the Irish were settled throughout London. Likewise, Dillon had found the Irish in all eight wards of Leeds but then had focused on three wards where 83.0% of the Irish were concentrated.
[16] Pooley, Segregation or integration? p. 73

Appendix 18

Nineteenth century Societal Attitudes. The prejudicial stereotype.

Nineteenth century Societal Attitudes.

Hickman perceptively observed, admittedly in 1996, that studies of the Irish in Britain 'have been locked away within an insulated world of the history of the Irish in Britain'.[17] This study takes cogniscience of her remark and acknowledges the benefit of setting the migrants not only in context of physical conditions in Coventry, but within the ambit of prevailing attitudes and values that less obviously, but just as significantly, shaped the plight and outlook of the city populace. Aspects of the religious forces, and cultural attitudes that impinged on local acceptance of the Irish have been addressed earlier in this study.

Harrison observed that the early Victorian period has an air of familiarity about it, especially on reading Charles Dickens. However this intimacy is deceptive since even in the relatively short time that has intervened, such rapid change has occurred in cultural perspectives, material circumstances and in the acceptance of secularism, rationalism and egalitarianism that it has compromised the modern capacity to understand the assumptions and conditions of Victorian society.[18] Duffy referred to this phenomenon as the 'credibility chasm'.[19] Today, the vicinity of St. Michael's appears as a relaxed Cathedral Quarter; an area where the remains of the Church are found in a setting of pride. It is therefore difficult to understand the Victorian mentality which allowed the edifice to be demeaned by the building at that time of slum dwellings, lanes and yards close to its walls.

A panoply of studies exists on nineteenth century 'ages', its social classes and its differentiated income groupings. The characteristics of such formations on either extreme of the scale may be obvious but there is much blending at the boundaries, and micro-difference within that use of the three ages: early, middle and late. Social, and occupational classifications based on income or skill may only broadly mirror reality. The supply of detail is massive and with differing and revised interpretations expressed, in either overview or topic-specific mode, evincing a concise apposite backdrop that remains firmly within the objectives of this study is a challenge.

The Irish when examined in isolation appear to have endured uniquely harsh social and economic conditions, but the experience of poverty was widespread in Victorian era. According to Harrison it was a poor economy for the labouring many.[20] Best noted a 'rough underside of the mid-Victorian economy where there was un- or under-employment, [and a] chronically inadequate means of subsistence'.[21] Not yet incipient for most was the modern understanding of 'disposable income'. For much of the century there was a presumed acceptance of the inevitability of poverty and inequality, of one's station in life being ordained, and of an unbridgeable difference between classes. Though in Coventry there is evidence of out-door relief, and charitable giving, those in poverty were not viewed by virtue of that circumstance as entitled to any amelioration of their position. In the nineteenth century the concept of unemployment according to Weinberger was not thought of as the result of a

---

[17] Mary J. Hickman, Incorporating and Denationalizing the Irish in England: the role of the Catholic Church', in Patrick O'Sullivan (ed.), *The Irish World Wide, History, Heritage, Identity* Vol. 5: *Religion and Identity*, (Leicester 1996) p. 197

[18] Harrison, *Early Victorian Britain*, p. 14

[19] Patrick J. Duffy, Landscape, in Alan Counihan (ed.), *Townlands*, (Dublin 2012) p. 79

[20] Harrison, *Early Victorian Britain*, p. 32

[21] Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain*, 1851-75, p. 139

malfunctioning economic system but seen more as individual failing.[22] An ultimate consequence of weak support for the unemployed was the large social problem of vagrancy. Begging was an activity, that was associated with the Irish, which was regarded with disdain. Population increase and inward migration from nearby localities placed demand on urban housing stock that was basic in quality. Kitson–Clark stated: 'In fact, the task of maintaining even a modicum of decency and health in the urban areas which developed in England in the early nineteenth century required resources which were not available, techniques which were not known, experts who had yet to learn their job'.[23]

Wilson concluded that in the 1850s the majority of Victorians if given the opportunity would not 'have tried to build a fairer and a more equitable society, giving succour to the poor Irish immigrants, the illegitimate waifs and strays in orphanages or workhouses or the mills and factories of the Midlands and the North. This was a ruthless, grabbing, competitive male-dominated society, stamping on its weaker members'.[24] It is to be realized that the host population also engaged in practices of excessive drinking, lodger keeping and house sharing. Drunkenness and consequent degradation was a serious universal problem according to Roberts writing at the beginning of the twentieth century.[25] However it was the extent to which the Irish engaged in these practices and particularly the overcrowding of houses that drew wider attention to themselves.[26] Gutteridge (Chapter 1.3) described the traditions involving drink in the factory where he was an apprentice weaver: 'these indulgences were the prelude in many instances to young men becoming habitual drunkards in an after life. Several within my own knowledge, through giving way to these temptations, have been cut off in the prime of life'.[27] There were 227 public houses in Coventry in 1849 - such a large number seemed to normalise the practice of alcohol consumption - with drunkenness a problem particularly on Saturday nights when wages were paid.[28]

In the background was what Wood called the 'tyranny of respectability'.[29] This mixture of religious propriety, sobriety, thrift, conformity in manners to strict social standards, dedication to hard work and a belief in self-help, was the cornerstone of Victorianism. It was believed that attachment to respectability was the mark of distinction that the middle classes utilised to separate itself from the working class. It would be easy to see how behaviour attributed to the Irish would doubtless offend this class. Noted Coventrian, Charles Bray (Chapter 1.3), referred to the decline of respectability in large cities as partly the responsibility of Irish immigrants. Haynes has shown for nearby Leicester, the importance of maintaining respectability was not confined to the middle class. According to Haynes 'historians have argued that the period 1845-80 witnessed an increasing acceptance by the English working class of a middle-class ethic of respectability' and that respectability was 'an increasingly important element in the development of working-class consciousness'. To them drinking illustrated a lack of self-discipline and undermined efforts at social improvement.[30] Weinberger concurring noted a shift in attitudes towards assault and

---

[22] Barbara Weinberger, Urban and rural crime rates and their genesis in late nineteenth-and early twentieth-century Britain, in Eric Arthur Johnson & Eric H. Monkkonen (eds.), *The Civilization of Crime: Violence in Town and Country Since the Middle Ages*, (Urbana & Chicago 1996) p. 208
[23] Kitson Clark, *Making of Victorian England*, p. 82
[24] Wilson, *The Victorians*, p. 120
[25] Roberts, *The Classic Slum*, pp. 122, 123
[26] Lowe, *Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire*, p. 61
[27] Chancellor, *Master and Artisan*, p. 98
[28] *Coventry Herald and Observer* 23rd February 1849
[29] Anthony Wood, *Nineteenth Century Britain 1815-1914*, (London 1960) p. 256
[30] Barry Haynes, Working–Class Respectability in Leicester c. 1845-80, *Transactions Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*, Vol. 65 1991 pp. 55- 67

casual violence in the later century which she believed was due to the cult of respectability being adopted by the working class. This 'remaking' of working class culture from 1870 onwards was accentuated by a shift away from violence and conflict, being replaced according to her by 'respect, respectability and acceptance of the status quo'.[31] The sustained reputation of the Irish, for excessive drinking and brawling, could now have been increasingly regarded by the working-class as offensive to their sensibilities, as it always had been to those of the middle-class. As the years rolled on, the Irish as part of the proletariat would have been also susceptible to 'remaking' of which Weinberger spoke.

A connection was seen between respectability and religious observance and this was to affect those Irish, who had not settled into a pattern of religious practice, as the Catholic Church viewed them through this prism of respectability.[32] The fervour of religion and evangelical zeal, together with the central role of religion in shaping social order and outlook were all profound forces in society, as was axiomatic the intrinsic position of Protestantism in the power structure, particularly in the early nineteenth century. On the revelation in the 1851 Religious Census that over 50% of eligible attendees attended church Coakley remarked that it would in present day eyes 'be worthy of note' but then this percentage would be viewed 'as an indictment of the ungodly nature of the country'.[33] Norman took the view that the nineteenth century, while not wholly confirmed by church attendance, was religious in outlook. This he saw in the 'amounts of public discussion on religious questions, of theological, devotional and ecclesiastical writing and of Church building...[and where] Religious passion was easily inflamed'.[34] However Inglis observed by the end of the century 'working class indifference to churches was normal, moral and political hostility was common.'[35]

There was no framework of laws to ensure any establishment disapproval of intolerance or to promote respect for cultural difference. Society then was racist in attitude toward the Irish. According to Garner although the English and Irish both had the same skin colour, a racist arrangement could exist. This is because in terms of the way difference is conceptualised by modern race theorists, 'race' is not solely down to skin colour.[36] Chinn saw a racism that was deep rooted and he remarked: 'Ideas that the Irish were a corrupting force were widespread. These beliefs were informed by a conscious racism. The Irish were demeaned and made to appear subhuman'.[37] The hidden effect of this prejudice, which is recorded as late as in 1970s Britain, on Irish self-esteem and on need to belong, is properly articulated by Chinn and it is suggested not weighed enough in the complex of forces affecting Irish experience.[38]

Cultural expectations were different, e.g. in terms of gender role, where males were breadwinners and females were homemakers. Child labour was tacitly accepted in the weaving industry and labourers were exploited through the requirement that long hours be toiled. There was a pronounced division of labour. Women took relatively unskilled work that was poorly rewarded and they gave up factory work on becoming

---

[31] Weinberger, Urban and rural crime rates, p. 208

[32] Gilley, English Catholic Attitudes to Irish, Catholics, p. 105

[33] Frances Coakley, *The 1851 Religious and Educational Censuses*, (1998) http://www.isle-of-man.com/manxnotebook/methdism/rc1851/rcu1851.htm Accessed 26th February 2019

[34] Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England*, p. 19

[35] Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes*, p. 329; Patricia Midgley, *The Churches and the Working Classes: Leeds, 1870-1920*, (Newcastle-upon-Tyne 2012) p. 5

[36] Garner, *Racism in the Irish Experience*, p. 129

[37] Carl Chinn, *Poverty Amidst Prosperity: The Urban Poor in England, 1834-1914*, (Lancaster 2006) p. 66

[38] The National Archives, Migration Histories. http://www.movinghere.org.uk/galleries/histories/irish/settling/racism_prejudice_1.htm# Accessed 26th January 2019

mothers.[39] Petrie said 'on her marriage a girl usually passed from dependence upon parents to submission to a husband... the conception of marriage as a partnership was quite unknown.[40] Mary Ann Evans, who used the pen name George Eliot lived in Coventry 1841 to 1849, was a rare example of dissension and her open defiance of these social conventions met with disapproval. 'Habits of deference, hierarchical assumptions, and an ideology which made acceptance of the social system seem 'natural', constituted an effective form of social control' noted Harrison.[41] Social orthodoxy was more rigorous and social stratification more fixed. Nonetheless, according to Miles, industrialisation and modernisation were to become over time highly effective social solvents.[42]

In the nineteenth century city the notion of a right to personal privacy was only realisable by an enriched middle class who could separate their work space from living space. The reality for many weavers was that their homes and places of work were integral and for those living in congested courts the notion of living in privacy, if understood, may have been regarded as a fanciful benefit outweighed by disadvantage. In Victorian times, sharing the company of those occupying a courtyard or lodging house may have been accepted without reflection as normal, since living in proximity provided a sense of belonging, mutual support, and cheap rent, that was made possible by an acceptance of overcrowding.

In line with remarks already made, on present day unrealised lack of familiarity with the nineteenth century, there was according to Fitzpatrick considerable family movement during the Famine years, that involved tramping; a walking practice out of place in today's long distance travel options, and if practised, only in desperation.[43] Yet, according to Samuel, in Victorian Britain 'The distinction between the nomadic life and the settled one was by no means hard and fast. Tramping was not the prerogative of the social out-cast, as it is today, it was the normal phase in the life of entirely respectable classes of working men; it was a frequent resort of the out-of-works, and it was a very principle of existence for those who followed the itinerant callings and trades'.[44]

The sense of distance between migrant origin and destination points, was apparent in the early nineteenth century, which was added to by knowledge of the travails involved in a long journey. It was only later in the century that mass media provided common awareness of regional disparity, and helped create an overarching popular culture. Thus, till late in the century, the initial adjustment by arrivers to the different cultural expectation of other cities, may have been traumatic. Neither had mass media by then created sufficient awareness or promoted respect for cultural differences to have softened an indigenous cultural snobbery towards traditions carried by the migrant. There was not instantaneous communication to permit an accurate assessment of circumstances in another region. It is to be wondered how fresh or impressionistic, were reports on the grapevine, from already arrived Irish migrants, on prospects in British locations, which reached those intending to journey. Relative to other textiles, the silk industry according to Best was 'in bad shape' and remained 'backward' and 'the least mechanised' in mid-Victorian Britain.[45] A cursory word of mouth report containing such observations issued to prospective migrants may have been enough to dissuade them from travelling to Coventry. The silk industry was an industry prone to economic

---

[39] Griffin, *Liberty's Dawn*, pp. 87, 97
[40] Charles Petrie, *The Victorians*, (London 1960) p. 206
[41] Harrison, *Early Victorian Britain*, p. 144
[42] Andrew Miles, *Social mobility in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century England*, p. 1
[43] Fitzpatrick, A peculiar tramping people, p. 629
[44] Raphael Samuel, Comers and Goers, in H.J. Dyos and Michael Wolff (eds.), *The Victorian city: Images and Realities*, (London 1976) p. 152
[45] Best, Mid-Victorian Britain 1851-75, p. 126

cycles and migrants tempted by favourable reports issued during an upswing might have travelled only to find deteriorating prospects on arrival.

Haley remarked that during the nineteenth century people did not have the emotional security in relation to health that improvements in medicine accord to today's society.[46] In that century, he stated, it was difficult to ever feel comfortable about the state of one's health' as 'the causes and patterns of disease [were] very much matters of speculation'. The behaviour of diseases caused alarm, as they might appear, then subside only to reappear again. An individual suffering with influenza would worry as the outcome of the infection could be equally benign or fatal. The onset of typhoid fever was gradual and was not immediately apparent to an individual as it mimicked the symptoms of a common cold. Its course then over some weeks, with shocking and painful symptoms, was a cause for anxiety. Recovery, which took some weeks, was dependent on the acuteness of attack and the resilience of the patient. Haley observed that 'Deficiency diseases, both glandular and dietary, were but dimly understood in those days. Proper diagnosis and effective treatment of goiter, diabetes, and the various vitamin deficiencies belong to the twentieth century'. In 1849 Ranger remarked in relation to Coventry's labouring population in silk and watches that many worked 'in confined and ill-ventilated habitations - evils to which those who work in factories are less subject.'[47] Many Irish were dressmakers, others sat at, or worked in the vicinity of looms in the production of silk cloth. Of interest therefore is Haley's revelation that 'milliners and dressmakers suffered from higher rates of anaemia, deteriorating vision, and various lung diseases caused by breathing dust and fine particles of fibre…while for…ten to twelve hours…sitting in one spot, often in an unnatural position, damaged the spine, the digestion and the circulation'.[48] Watchmakers also sat for long periods and the need to focus on the fine parts of watches must, where light was not sufficiently strong, have eventually have damaged their vision. The Irish-born Medical Officer for Coventry, Mark Fenton in his report of 1890 drew attention to conditions of polishers in bicycle factories:

> 'Here the operative works in an atmosphere laden with dust and debris, thrown off from the rapidly revolving stones, discs and brushes, upon which the part is held by the artisan for the purpose of polishing. A powder is also used to facilitate the process which adds to the amount of suspended matter in the atmosphere. No particular means of ventilation or other device appears to be adopted to carry off this loaded atmosphere. The continuous inspiration of airs thus charged has long been known to produce diseases of the [lungs]'.[49]

Viewed as an era, advance is more apparent as the nineteenth century proceeded. Transport improvement was typified by the opening in 1838 of the London to Birmingham railway that passed through Coventry. Industrial advance is illustrated by the rapid application of steam power to Coventry workshops after 1838, where seven years earlier, a workshop to which steam had been introduced was burnt down by an angry mob. Social order was imposed on society through the establishment of local constabularies such as that for Coventry in 1836. There was a beneficial culture of reform and intervention through civil, social and industrial legislation even though it was based on the Victorian moral outlook which saw the poor circumstance of the masses as having arisen from their own deficiencies and not from being casualties of

---

[46] Bruce Haley, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture*, (Harvard 1978) p. 11
[47] *Coventry Standard* 29th June 1849
[48] Bruce Haley, *Healthy Body and Victorian Culture*, pp. 11, 12
[49] *Coventry Herald* 17th April 1891

inequality and oppressive economic conditions.[50] Municipal improvement was evident with enquiries into the state of towns and follow-on progress in the provision of infrastructure. Over the second half of the century availability of clean water, organised sewage disposal, lodging house regulation, hospital and cemetery provision and the supply of town gas became commonplace in Coventry. Emancipation granted in 1829 led to renewed Catholic institutional confidence. A series of Factory Acts that commenced in 1833 gradually limited the inhumane length of the hours worked by women and children. The First Reform Act in 1832 modestly accommodated middle class radicals by enfranchising borough occupiers whose property was rated at £10 or more per annum. While it only enfranchised one thirtieth of the country, it nevertheless opened the door to future reform. The Second Reform Act in 1867 widened the franchise to all householders who paid rates and to all lodgers who paid £10 in rent per annum. The Corn Laws were repealed in 1846 in the face of strong opposition. The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 introduced a centralised controlling administration whose aim was to discontinue outdoor relief and enforce a policy of austere conditions in Union workhouses to ensure only the destitute sought relief. The purpose of the excoriated Act was the discouragement of persons from becoming paupers, and thus reducing the unsustainable cost of providing relief. However, it also contained an innovative application of 'the principle that the state had a responsibility to provide uniform standards of support to the poor'.[51] Nonetheless, no functioning nationally organised system of state social support existed, that in its delivery would have maintained the dignity of recipients or protected them from destitution in times of recession. Thus, those on slender means may have felt compelled to accept lodgers to provide an income. An aged parent or in-law requiring sanctuary, may have imposed on adult offspring thereby increasing household size of the latter. An elderly parent, not living with adult children, might need to be monitored which could confine the adult children to reside nearby, and so contribute to a clustering effect picked up in studies examining Irish settlement pattern.

Legislative reform was not smoothly achieved or always welcomed. It met disinterest or resistance from vested interests, and reformists did not always succeed, e.g. the Chartists failed to obtain voting rights for all; indeed it was not a cause enthusiastically endorsed by Coventrians. Catholics enjoying emancipation were resentfully accused of flagrantly taking advantage of their new found freedom. Reform of civil legislation had pushed into the background the impact of agreements on trade. The lifting of import restriction in 1826 was the knock-out blow to the Irish silk trade and left little future in Dublin for weavers. In Coventry the lifting of prohibition and its replacement by a 30% tariff energised an industry that had become complacement by the shelter of prohibition. The Cobden-Chevalier Treaty of 1860 which allowed free trade between Britain and France destroyed Coventry's silk industry.

The repercussions of reform as it specifically affected many Irish migrants were either negative or offered no immediate advantage. The application of the Poor law amendment Act had a harsh impact, and those forced to avail of Coventry Workhouse found previously relaxed regulation tightened in the 1840s. Where some new constabularies, fortunately not in Coventry, zealously enforced laws around alcohol availability, and disorderly behaviour, it led to migrant antagonism towards the police. Widening of the franchise in 1867 must have, if indeed it caught the attention of migrants, appeared to the majority as an action that would have little effect on their everyday lives, unlike it must be assumed the more manifest, disliked intrusions of local inspectors monitoring overcrowding and pig-keeping. The desirability of passing

[50] Dolin, *George Eliot*, p. 53
[51] Ibid., p. 52

legislation, that would have crucially assisted migrants through preventing discrimination, or establishing state social support, did not cross the public mind.

The absence of the ability to control family size meant the prospect of large families. Childbirth or major illness especially in infancy or old age could have more serious consequences resulting in higher infant mortality and lower life expectancy.[52] Hardship, poverty and a sense of day-to-day survival were pervasive, without an adequate safety net to assist in times of unemployment or ill health. Unregulated or poorly enforced work conditions resulted in long working hours over six days of the week and permitted children to commence work as early as six years of age in order to supplement household income. For many the lack of permanency in employment or in tenure led to a short term outlook. Assistance was provided by provident societies, charitable institutions, outdoor poor relief, or within the workhouse. According to Prest 'Men [Coventry weavers] of this kind probably suffered less from physical ailments than from the mental strain occasioned by the fear of unemployment, and by the fear of old age… to the average factory hand and journeyman's journeyman in the city these were constant worries, while to the best class of weavers, the first hands, they must have been a nightmare…'.[53] Lowe suggests unemployment was understood differently in the nineteenth century as few described themselves as unemployed in the census, yet much of the time employment was casual and seasonal.[54] In the case of Coventry, the silk trade was seasonal being particularly slack in summer. The bucolic image of carefree domestic weavers, at this time of year tending to their gardens, belied the fact that they had no weaving orders. The trade was subject to the vagaries of changing fashions - to lace from ribbon, with Prest observing 'sometimes without warning, ladies would give up wearing ribbons for the year, and ornament their dresses with beads or feathers instead'.[55] Griffen drew attention to the casual, intermittent, and fleeting nature of work that women performed.[56] The material well-being of many skilled British workers had less to do with the wages they received than with the fact that they were at work week in and out throughout the year. It was a century of social and economic change. There was a rising number of persons described as middle-class and a solidification of the majority who self-identified as working-class, but circumstances within this classes varied. Theodore Hoppen spoke of a line of poverty that ran through the working class and the frequency with which workers found themselves above or below the line decided their life experience. Looking at social boundaries he called attention to the variety of less obvious reasons, beyond earning capacity as to why a person was regarded as on one or other side of the social divide. He exampled the distance in social regard between a well-paid skilled artisan and the lower middle class clerk who earned less. He guided that one of the greatest divisions in society was not found where the lower and middle, or, it and the upper class separated, but between the poor or 'residuum' and the rest. Amounting to perhaps three million in Britain this was a 'substantial group of very poor people thoroughly broken by chronic distress'.[57] Their circumstances were not fully apparent either; Marcus referred to radial roads in towns (which were found in Coventry) with their fronting shops acting as palisades along which the wealthy

[52] In 1881 the number of widow-headed households was 1,163 which represented 11.8% of the city's 9,848 households. The widow total of 1,163 was comprised of 718 widows with co-residing children and 445 widows without co-residing children. What was striking was that 331 or 28.5% were under 50 years of age.
[53] Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, p. 76
[54] Lowe, *Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire*, p. 96
[55] E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London 1968) p. 287; Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, p. 44
[56] Griffin, *Liberty's Dawn*, p. 103
[57] Hoppen, *Mid-Victorian Generation, 1846-1886*, pp. 60-64

travelled screening the social truths about courts or side streets.[58] Economic change was unrelenting, though in the case of Coventry later than elsewhere, and had left the production method of particular sections of the workforce redundant. Technology forced change from hand to powered production lessening the standing of respected weaving craftsmen achieved through lengthy apprenticeships. Their unrelenting suspicion and resistance in the form of strikes served to weaken the viability of the municipal industry. The onset of an era of mass produced cheaper goods, such as watches, diminished the popularity of Coventry's more individually crafted watch pieces and the prospects of the watchmakers. The expansion of foreign imports with fresh styling and keen pricing, constantly threatened the survival of local production. The continued rapid population increase, of some other cities, during the century, such as Leicester and Birmingham provided their industries with greater local demand. Change was to favour Coventry in the last quarter of the century, as it became home of the bicycle industry with associated population expansion, but competition would again ruin that hegemony.

Griffin while acknowledging the harsh conditions that existed in the early nineteenth century believed, against the general stance of historiographical thinking, that there was less drudgery relative to centuries previous to the nineteenth. To her, city living was perceived by indigenous migrants to the nineteenth century city as offering opportunity where none existed before.[59] Similarly the circumstances of Irish city habitation appear dreadful, but enduring these on moving to Britain, was nevertheless to the Irish an advance on the hopelessness, squalor, penury, or restriction on personal freedom they had left behind. Kitson Clarke stated 'the city offered the chance of survival to many who would otherwise not have survived, and possibly life in a cellar in Manchester was better than death by the roadside in Connemara, though not much better'.[60] Neal concurred that for those in Ireland contemplating leaving, 'Poverty in England was considered better than poverty in Ireland'.[61] Finally an overview may not apply to the particular. The period from 1850 to 1873 was seen as a time of national ascendancy and confidence as exemplified in the Great Exhibition of 1851. Free trade led to Britain dominating world trade in manufactured goods, and for it to be described as the workshop of the world. That very free trade demoralised Coventry in the 1860s, but in chastening the city it may have permitted greater tolerance to develop to the advantage of the Irish.

Promotion of the prejudicial stereotype in Coventry

In modern reportage 'Irishman' appears frequently, but is used benignly as a descriptor of origin. However, in the nineteenth century, use of the term 'Irishman' had a more pejorative ring, and its use in a report immediately introduced, for colouration of the report, stereotypes of Irish character or behaviour which were largely negative. Many authors have explained the origin and nature of this stereotype, including Davis who said it was deeply embedded in common culture.[62] On occasions, the content of a

[58] Steven Marcus, Reading the Illegible, in H.J. Dyos and Michael Wolff (eds.), *The Victorian city: Images and Realities*, (London 1976) p. 259
[59] Griffin, *Liberty's Dawn*, pp. 17-20, 35
[60] Kitson Clark, *Making of Victorian England*, p. 95
[61] Frank Neal, The English Poor Law, the Irish migrant and the laws of settlement and removal, 1819-1879, in D. George Boyce & Roger Swift (eds.), *Problems and Perspectives in Irish History since 1800*, (Dublin 2004) p. 116
[62] Davis, Irish in Britain, 1815-1939, p. 123. This adverse conceptualisation of the Irish was long ingrained in the public mind. It was not an entirely nineteenth century meme. Earlier noted was J.B. Priestley's view of Coventry as 'genuinely old and picturesque'. Samuel draws attention to Priestley's view of the Irish expressed in the same book. His prejudice, perhaps even modified owing to its appearance in print, provides an indication of the deep unspoken anti-Irish resentments that continued into the twentieth century. The following sentences by Priestley, *English Journey* pp. 248, 249, albeit in

report provided facts which aligned with the negative stereotype, and provided both 'proof' and reinforcement of the stereotype. Words from a long list of negative adjectives, particularly 'low' when applied to 'Irish' compounded the inherent negativity of the term 'Irish' which itself had negative adjectival connotations, as in 'Irish row', 'Irish mob', 'Irish assault' or 'Irish tramp'.

This study (Appendix 4) provides copious examples of newspapers reporting circumstances - especially around alcohol and disorder - that would associate denigration to the word 'Irishman'. When appearing before the bench Edward Kelly was described as 'a big muscular Irishman' in the *Herald* 12th July 1850, Edward Macdoran was referred to as a 'strong, muscular Irishman' in the *Herald* 16th May 1851, Tom Geary was called 'a very wild Irishman' in the *Herald* 2nd January 1857, John Duffy was described as an 'Irishman clad in the usual wretched garb of his countrymen' in the *Herald* 10th August 1849, while Peter Mandon was called an 'immense Irishman' in the *Herald* 13th October 1851. John Higgins in the *Herald* 5th November 1859 was found so helplessly drunk on the Warwick Road that he had to be conveyed to the detention centre in a wheelbarrow and was referred to as a 'wild-looking Irishman'. John Smith was called 'a sturdy Irish beggar' in the *Herald* 24th November 1848 while in describing the drunken antics of John Bracken in the same paper on 16th May 1845, which provided reinforcement of clichés about the Irish, he was referred to as 'the little Irishman with the unlucky plate in his head'. Women did not avoid their nationality being raised, as when Catherine Doran was found 'gloriously drunk' and referred to as 'a lovely sample of female excellence from the Emerald Isle'.[63]

The *Coventry Times* in its Varieties column week after week shaped negative conceptions by telling jokes at the expense of the Irish who appeared imbecilic. The newspapers could depict the Irish as either stupid or crafty. The former was served through the Irish joke, which might play on the fact that an Irish person, who was in an occupation that pre-supposed learning, was actually a dullard. Exasperation at inferred Irish craftiness and advantage taking, was illustrated by the *Standard* 15th December 1848, which under a heading 'Irish Pauperism' noted that the Union of Westport had received British grants and loans in two years of £133,331 while the Union itself in the last five had raised a mere £4,115 (Appendix 8 (7)). While content of reports, helped shape a view of the Irish, the various styles of newspaper writing were prejudicial in nature, evoking against the Irish, anger, fear or derision. Reports frequently devoted to Irish anti-social behaviour could be loaded with negatively charged description. They could have occurred far away but still were featured in the Coventry press. The *Herald* 17th September 1824 published an extract from a private letter from Wateringbury in Kent which said that that in the hop picking month of September:

> 'we are infested with men, women and children, of all sorts and complexions…there are many thousands composed principally of the low Irish. We are actually afraid to rest, as not a night passes without serious and alarming squabbles taking place between them…broken heads, bloody noses, and frightful riots are the order of the night…'

---

relation to Liverpool in 1934, serves as a reality check on any scepticism about the existence or strength of such prejudice.

> 'Irish appear in general never even to have tried; they have settled in the nearest poor quarter and turned it into a slum, or, finding a slum, have promptly settled down to out-slum it… If we do have an Irish Republic as our neighbour, and it is found possible to return her exiled citizens, what a grand clearance there will be in all the western ports, from the Clyde to Cardiff, what a fine exit of ignorance and dirt and drunkenness and disease…the Irishman in England too often cuts a very miserable figure. He has lost his peasant virtues, whatever they are, and has acquired no others.'

[63] *Coventry Standard* 1st December 1837

Reports could be of local origin and produced as if written by template, highlighting drunkenness and fights (Appendix 4). The Irish dialect could be parodied in a report for its apparent inarticulacy, especially if counterpoised with well-turned language in the remainder of the piece. Scorn could be increased by adding a figure-of-fun treatment; three examples of such ridiculing incidents are found in Appendix 8 (3).

A story might employ a parodistic style, or emblematic Irish words that were encoded to belittle. The *Herald* 1st May 1835 stated:

> 'Patrick O'Sullivan, a gem of the Emerald isle, charged with "kicking up a shy," whereby the outward man of William Griffiths suffered damage.'

Back-handed complimenting and lampooning abounded; Daniel O'Connell was not immune from an ironic and epithetic style of reference as found in a piece in the *Standard* 7th April 1837.

> 'His most serene *mendicant* majesty the supreme King of the Beggars, patron of the Dublin Rebellion Rent Association, having (according to the authority of a poetical correspondent of the *Times*) returned from the lower regions, where he was *expelled* by the king of those dominions, as too daring a personage for his family association, has, in his assumed capacity of Governor-General for all Ireland, turned *loyalist*, and the denunciator of papal treason, said by him to exist in certain *secret* societies in Dublin! Moreover, this most estimable personage has proposed to contaminate with his presence the air of Kensington Palace, by being the organ of presenting a congratulatory *loyal address*, from his own treasonable camp to the princess Victoria, in the ensuing month, on the occasion of her Royal Highness attaining her majority as the *heiress presumptive* to the crown of these Protestant realms! The perjury of this amiable gentleman towards the Protestant Church, has been so richly exposed by the *Times*, that we doubt not but her Royal Highness and her advisers will take due advantage of the warning given; and we think that neither the great *Bull of Derrynane*, nor his choice compatriot the *Durham Ox*, are likely to get their *hoofs* admitted to tread in close stabling room in the Royal Palace of Kensington.[64]

[64] Italics as per original. 'Durham Ox' referred to Joseph Pease MP for South Durham 1832-1841, who was the first Quaker to take a seat in Parliament. He was a Whig supporter and was in favour of the abolition of slavery.

Appendix 19

Understandings of ethnicity, community and behaviour

The terms 'Irish' and 'Irishness' had a variety of applications that also differed from a host or migrant standpoint. Garner saw the word 'Irish' in contemporary newspaper reporting as a loaded term[1]. Finnegan noted the eccentricity that newspapers attached to the Irish. She quoted from the *York Gazette* 'The Irish people are literally Irish in everything they do. Every act of their lives denotes their peculiarity'. She found the theme continued in the *Yorkshireman* which stated in 1847 'the Irish are a strange and unfathomable people. Their ways are not such as other men - their motives are often past finding out. They will not profit by exhortation nor learn wisdom by science which teaches by example'.[2]

Irish identity could have been constructed, reformulated, kept low-key, or celebrated. Busteed through his analysis of Irish street ballads in 1850s and 1860s Manchester found 'however fitfully, Irish migrants were adjusting to their new situation' with increasing confidence and were 'retaining yet modifying aspects of their Irishness and thereby redefining it'.[3] Belchem refers to the 'invention' by middle-class Irish in America of an Irish 'imagined' identity based on migrants having pride in themselves, which meant conforming to the values of the host society and discarding the behaviours which had brought opprobrium on them. In Liverpool he noted a similar appropriation where Catholic middle class migrants took control of 'Irishness' and thus it conformed to the political and social order which included among other objectives instructing the poor in respectability and citizenship. He stated 'in taking such active charge of these tasks, the middle-class culture brokers constructed a self-enclosed, self sufficient network, which, viewed from the host outside, emphasized Irish Catholic apartness'.[4] Lees explained that 'Irish migrants kept their Catholic identity and their generally subordinate economic and social status vis-vis the English, but they had to redefine that identity and status in terms of an urban milieu. One avenue of cultural adaptation was provided by the Catholic church…' She stated that the church 'actively fought continued attachment to the cultural world of the Irish countryside. At the same time, priests helped migrants to adapt Irish popular culture to an urban setting'. She continued 'Roman Catholic culture as it touched the Irish thus contained heavy doses of social discipline. But it also helped migrants to adapt to urban society and to develop wider loyalties'.[5]

Herson precisely commented that 'Irish identity was not a single phenomenon'.[6] According to Swift and Gilley 'the identity of the Irish in Victorian Britain is, like Irish identity elsewhere, a somewhat complicated and shifting concept, moving and developing throughout the period….' They stated: 'It differed from place to place and from one generation to another'.[7] For subsequent generations of culturally Irish but born in Britain Irish identity took a derived form. Fielding wrote that the Irish were 'neither completely Irish or wholly English. They possessed a third cultural identity that

---

[1] Garner, *Racism in the Irish Experience*, p. 122
[2] Finnegan, *Irish in York*, pp. 171, 172
[3] Mervyn Busteed, Identities in transition: Irish migrant outlooks in mid-Victorian Manchester, in D. George Boyce & Roger Swift (eds.), *Problems and Perspectives in Irish History since 1800*, (Dublin 2004) p. 94
[4] John Belchem, Class, creed and country: The Irish middle class in Victorian Liverpool, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain*, (London 1999) pp. 191, 192
[5] Lees, *Exiles of Erin*, pp. 186, 190, 193
[6] Herson, A small-town perspective, p. 94
[7] Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley, Introduction: Irish identities in Victorian Britain, pp. 1, 5

fell, awkwardly, somewhere between the two'.[8] The strength of ethnic identity must have been tempered by: socio-economic standings i.e. whether perceived as 'low' or respectable, strength of religious adherence, intensities of generic anti-Irish prejudice encountered, interest in the Ireland Question, and cultural vibrancy e.g. the evocation of roots during St Patrick's Day parades and celebrations. Migrants may have prioritised their economic interest and 'respectability' over their national identity when circumstances required. Irish migrants of the twentieth first century in London were beheld 'dipping in and out' of their Irishness.[9] Collier remarked that 'the boundaries of the diaspora are blurred: many people have one foot in their migrant past and the other in a mainstream future.[10] In addition, in households where only one partner was Irish-born - a not uncommon occurrence in Coventry - and where, in that type of household the male head was British by birth, the sense of Irishness may have been slight. This may have been due to the male parent in the patriarchial society of the time having greater sway over the cultural direction of the family. An opposing view of the mother's insignificant role in cultural and religious transmission is that the mother may have determined what religion the children practiced and what schools they attended. Tom Barclay (1852-1933) referred to in Chapter 1.1 acknowledged his mother's strong Catholicism and her role in keeping alive a sense of Irishness.[11]

Understandings of the word 'community' run wide in studies and have implications for compatibility in research. The term is used as a collective noun to distinguish the Irish from the natives and such use may leave a superficial impression of a unitary culture. It can also, in its application as a descriptor of the Irish forming a segment of society, imply cultural isolation of a type that persists and becomes entrenched. Or it may be used as implying migrant social cohesion, but the characteristics of that cohesion are seldom specified and appear to be taken for granted as understood. Perhaps such implied cohesion is unattainable where there was, what Gilley referred to as, a 'complexity of loyalties' to, national, religious and ethnic identity at family, local and national levels.[12] During the early post-Famine years a prevailing desire to survive may have led to the decisions being made only on basic issues e.g. on finding relief, shelter and work, and for a large number of migrants to be of a similar mind in coming to a decision. For these years of flux, an analytical approach invoking commonality and community may adequately portray the situation especially if there was an oppositional stance to the host community. There is greater difficulty is assessing cultural affiliation and degree of community bonding for the years when local-born children of Irish parentage come into their own. Herson does enlighten that many historians in their reference to common culture are 'usually concentrating on the apartness of the pauper Irish Catholic Celt' who was found in concentrations in cities.[13] In that regard Lowe stated 'The large numbers of desperate famine immigrants gave the Irish community a one-dimensional and homogeneously-impoverished appearance'[14] Herson saw migrant size as important in the ability of a location to sustain an 'Irish-only' culture.[15] For O'Leary virulence of the public strengthened Irish bonding: 'The Irish were drawn together by the attitudes of outsiders, who perceived

[8] Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 17
[9] Mark Hennessy reports on the new generation of homeless emigrants arriving at the London Irish Centre's door in Camden. *Irish Times* December 28, 2013
[10] Paul Collier, *Exodus Immigration and Multiculturalism in the 21st Century*, (London 2013) p. 41
[11] Barclay, *Memoirs and Medleys*, pp. 6, 7, 10, 24
[12] Gilley, Roman Catholicism, p. 153
[13] Herson, A small-town perspective, p. 94
[14] Lowe, *Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire*, p. 69
[15] Herson, A small-town perspective, p. 94

them as a homogeneous pariah group constituting a very real threat to the health, employment and values of the host society.'[16]

Community is a term commonly applied to Irish sharing a common location; represented within a city as a cluster of Irish. The location maintained its milieu because it facilitated networking and was reinforced by fresh migrants to whom it offered comfort in a strange city, and security against hostility. This was a physical expression of community where a shared outlook manifested itself in close residence. O'Leary reminded that 'in reality, the Irish were a more heterogeneous group than many contemporaries conceded and were distributed more widely throughout the urban hierarchy than the emphasis upon clustering would allow.[17] Persons outside of Irish zones of physical proximity could be of the community also. However the use of the term community in this context is more problematic. Jeffes commented in relation to Chester that it would be 'highly dubious' to see the term as applicable to those Irish living in smaller numbers beyond the Irish core area of St. John's Parish in Chester.[18] Miskell made an interesting observation in her essay on Camborne located off the well-beaten track trod by historians toward large cities. She noted that the earlier understanding of community, when enquiry then centred on how segregated the Irish were, was that of it applying to an Irish 'residential' area. Over time it was realised that such residential areas were not internally homogenous, so use of the term has 'shifted away from residential proximity to take into account factors such as social networks and support systems as evidence of communities'.[19] There is however difficulty in assessing the nature of a community that was less physically proximate, as to what degree of bond its members enjoyed, as this depended on the extent of values, beliefs, and objectives shared.

Indeed the very existence of a community in Stafford among a transient, mobile, unsettled Irish population was raised by Herson, who suggested it may be unwise to identify migrants as bound by social cohesion. He noted 'cohesion more apparent than real' could be suggested inadvertently by the snapshot nature of the census.[20] Again the care required in basing conclusions about cohesion on census statistical stability is underlined by Fitzpatrick's observation that such representation masked a migrant condition of 'perpetual transience'.[21] If there was such cohesion it may have only applied to a minority who were settled in a locality. In the case of Stafford, Herson identified the pauper Irish, Ulster Protestants, and Dublin-born skilled, as indicative of migrants with different 'origin, status and lifestyle'. Coupled with a low Irish population total, that would not sustain an 'Irish-only' society, he could not see Irish identity as an encapsulating unitary social phenomenon'. Rather he saw sub-groups centred on origin such as the Roscommon Irish, or on occupations such as labouring or shoemaking. He was reluctant to describe the Irish in Stafford as a 'community' and would not stretch beyond acknowledging the presence of 'camaraderie' among Irish people. He pointed out that Irish origin, of itself, would not guarantee that Irish migrants would bond. While there was evidence of closeness between those who had originated in Castlerea, Co Roscommon, for many others from the rest of Ireland there may not have been the same area of origin attachment.[22]

Regarding common origin as a basis for cultural cohesion Pooley had recognised by 1989 that most studies misguidedly 'assume implicitly that being born in Ireland

---

[16] O'Leary, *Irish in Wales*, p. 113
[17] Ibid., pp. 128-129
[18] Jeffes, Irish in Chester, p. 96
[19] Miskell, Irish immigrants in Cornwall, p. 39
[20] Herson, A small-town perspective, p. 85
[21] Fitzpatrick, A peculiar tramping people, p. 636
[22] Herson, A small-town perspective, pp. 94, 95

indicated adherence to a single uniform Irish culture'.[23] There was not a universal culture available to be transposed to Britain; it was subject to regional variation in Ireland. On vacating Ireland, Munster emigrants largely entered Britain through Bristol and thence made towards London. Ulster emigrants generally embarked for Glasgow and southern Scotland. West of Ireland emigrants were served by Liverpool and latterly Holyhead, ports more aligned with Coventry traffic; thus a preponderance of these latter emigrants were to be found in the city. There was a single mention of regional rivalry in one Coventry location. The *Herald* in 1842 reported John Conroy was before the magistrates for assaulting James Hickey; the latter was:

> 'the only Munster man in rag-fair district [Greyfriars Lane/Warwick Lane], while the others are all Connaughters, [which] has been for some time past in constant hot water and perpetual rows, in consequence of the native provincial jealousy which, somehow or other, has the effect of setting them altogether by the ears upon the slightest provocation, and sometimes from the simple love of a kick-up, so that the lane has latterly been in a continual state of uproar.'[24]

However divisions need not have been at a provincial level but could exist between different families who were in dispute with each other due to old grudges held. (See Appendix 4, 20th April 1855 and 25th September 1859). Further, it could be argued a difference existed between the outlook of young Irish, fresh from rural western Ireland and Irish with Dublin connections who had resided in Coventry for some years. Fitzpatrick recorded that shortly after the Famine on the Cork-Bristol route, the 'poor and destitute of 1849-50 had already given place by 1854 to 'the strong working people…the labouring classes; servant boys and girls'.[25] Mulkern when considering Irish immigrants and public disorder pointed out in relation to Coventry that it 'demonstrates the variety of immigrant experience within the Irish community by revealing the division between those who engaged in fights and challenged the police, and those who preferred to co-exist peacefully with their fellow-countrymen and English neighbours'.[26] Lowe noted that not only had the Famine migrants little in common with the host population but they had little in common with many Irish already settled in the northwest of England.[27] Later, at the beginning of the last century, Roberts in his account of growing up the classic slum in Manchester told that:

> 'Irish families long established in the neighbourhood… disliked the influx of raw compatriots whose poverty and ignorance of local mores might again raise doubts about their own standing. In the shop they would, at times, apologize for or try to condone the habits of those who were 'just off the bog' or had 'come over with the cattle''.[28]

Circumstances in Britain did not induce homogeneity either. Harrison remarked that 'the regional and national diversity of Britain is seldom sufficiently emphasised'.[29] Thus there may have been a hybridity; of Irish with differing outlooks blended from British regional attitudes and their own Irish regional cultural background. Busteed reminds that the Irish migrants communities were caught 'between memories of and aspirations

---

[23] Pooley, Segregation or integration? p. 73
[24] *Coventry Herald* 12th August 1842
[25] Fitzpatrick, A peculiar tramping people, p. 628
[26] Mulkern, Irish Immigrants and Public Disorder, p. 132
[27] Lowe, *Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire*, p. 69
[28] Roberts, *The Classic Slum*, p. 110
[29] Harrison, *Early Victorian Britain*, p. 12

for Ireland and the need to make their way in the countries where they had settled'.[30] There is a suspicion 'Irish' persons at the cultural margin may have felt equally at ease inside or outside the grouping, or on a religio-political basis quite outside. In Chapter 1.1 Fitzpatrick reminded there were divisions later in the century 'between those who tried to replant their Irish culture in Britain, those who created a hybrid immigrant culture and those who did their best to 'forget' that they were Irish'.[31]

According to Hickman, community can be diverse and heterogeneous in its ethos and the criteria for Irish identifying with the community would not necessarily be the same for all Irish people or subsequent generations. She viewed community as more than an observable reality and spoke of the 'imagined' community and how it might represent itself. In such a complex articulation of community evidence that Irish and English lived on the same street could not be simply taken as proof there was no segregation. Again there could be a public posture of assimilative behaviour through keeping a low profile to avoid anti-Irish prejudice, but a mental world at variance.[32] Also the inconsistent noting of Irish county of birth, and not at all before 1851, lessens the accurate assessment of the role of origin, in community formation.

The composition of an appropriate quantum of Irish for analysis in studies varies according to who the researcher considered qualified for inclusion as Irish. Some studies presented statistics solely on Irish-born, perhaps briefly acknowledging that Irish-born aggregates do not coincide with the numerical impact of the Irish community. Neal in his essay on Irish settlement in Newcastle in 1851 and again in his study of mid-century settlement in Northumberland, Durham and Lancashire presented data specifically on Irish-born.[33] Likewise did Chinn for Birmingham in his study on 1851.[34] For Large in his 1851 Bristol study, 'Irish' calculations related only to the Irish-born, although in an analysis of Irish occupations he included children (aged 5-12 inclusive) born in Britain provided one or both parents were Irish-born.[35] Murphy in his Nottingham essay defined all those in a family as Irish if the household head was Irish-born.[36]

Others believed their studies were more authentic if they delineated a more numerically embodied 'community' beyond an aggregate of Irish-born, by including with the Irish-born those that could be detected with an Irish connection. The criteria for inclusion as 'Irish' varied but were largely based on family or kinship ties that could be identified for those resided with an Irish-born household head and/or spouse. Busteed in his Manchester study required both parents to be Irish-born in order for children to be treated as Irish.[37] To qualify for inclusion in Lees' samples a household needed to contain an Irish-born member either in the nuclear family of the head or among the lodgers, visitors, and servants of that household.[38] Finnegan referred to an Irish 'population' or 'community' composed of all persons of Irish birth, their children

[30] Busteed, Identities in transition, p. 80
[31] Fitzpatrick, A curious middle place, pp. 30, 44
[32] Hickman, Alternative historiographies pp. 240, 241, 253. She stated that this keeping of a low-profile has been misread by historians as the occurrence of assimilation.
[33] Frank Neal, The Foundations of the Irish Settlement in Newcastle upon Tyne: The Evidence in the 1851 Census, in Donald MacRaild (ed.), *The Great Famine and Beyond: Irish Migrants in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Dublin 2000) pp. 71-93; Frank Neal, Irish settlement in the north-east and north-west of England in the mid-nineteenth century, in R. Swift & S. Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain* (London 1999) pp. 75-100
[34] Chinn, 'Sturdy Catholic emigrants', pp. 52-74
[35] Large, Irish in Bristol, pp. 37-58
[36] Murphy, Irish in Nottingham, p. 83
[37] Mervyn Busteed, Little Islands of Erin: Irish settlement and Identity in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Manchester, in Donald M. MacRaild (ed.), *The Great Famine and Beyond: Irish Migrants in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Dublin 2000) p. 96
[38] Lees, *Exiles of Erin*, p. 252

regardless of birthplace, and non-Irish married to Irish and the children of such relationships.[39] Similarly Lowe in his Lancashire study defined a household as 'Irish' if the household head (almost always male) was Irish-born, but in some considerations where he desired to reach a higher threshold of 'Irishness' he required at least one other resident of the dwelling to also be Irish-born.[40] This may be considered too strict and may have elicited an excessively intense Irish finding.[41] Danaher in his Leicester research referred to a household as 'effectively' Irish if either household head or spouse were Irish-born.[42] In studies, these 'Irish' qualifying criteria may not be clearly offered but may be mentioned in a passing sentence or brief endnote.[43]

The term Irishcom is used throughout this study to identify those of interest to this research. It is used foremost as a straightforward statistical label differentiating those being studied from the rest of the city's population. It comprised not only the Irish-born but also their British-born spouses and residing children. It was sufficient for one parent, male or female to be Irish-born for the remainder of the family wherever born to be included within this understanding of community. To exclude British-born children residing with an Irish-born parent, or to exclude a family where but one of the two parents residing together is Irish-born, may not detect for consideration the possible numerical 'community' extent or strength of a midlands reality of a substantial number of ethnically mixed marriages. Fitzpatrick's warning, noted in Chapter 7, is salient in relation to Coventry when he remarked on Lowe's sampling procedure that in ensuring Irish community purity by ignoring mixed marriages, a 'sidestepping of the complexities and ambiguities of emigrant 'Irishness' is to exaggerate the cohesiveness of a supposed community'.[44] There is an awareness that inclusion of persons on the basis of there being one Irish-born parent present may circumscribe those with a diffuse Irish connection. This is most felt in the study where direct comparison is made between Irishcom heads and Coventry Host heads, where Irishcom heads will include some British men married to Irish-born women. These British men may have had attributes more aligned with the Coventry Host population, but since a dividing line has to be drawn and because they are married to Irish-born women they are treated as Irishcom.

Dennis stated that one understanding of ethnicity is where it is 'defined with respect to culture, attitudes and behaviour or - at its most basic - as associational involvement', but such a definition he noted 'may have nothing to do with a person's appearance or birthplace.'[45] His observation precisely describes the drawback inherent in the process of attempting to garner appropriate persons from the census on birthplace criteria. Pooley also pointed out the limitation of the census in that it 'does not allow different shades of cultural identity to be distinguished'.[46] Nevertheless, however imperfect, approaching the census with birthplace as the key marker in order to arrange a populace for study remains the most effective and indeed only option available.

---

[39] Finnegan, *Irish in York*, p. 1
[40] Lowe, *Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire*, p. 48
[41] Ibid., p. 48
[42] Danaher, *Irish in Leicester*, p. 12
[43] Roger Swift provided but a brief statement in an endnote to his study relating to Wolverhampton: 'Census Return, 1851 & 1871. These figures include English-born members of Irish families'. (Swift, 'Another Stafford Street Row', p. 201).
[44] David Fitzpatrick, Review: The Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire by W.J. Lowe, *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 109, No. 430 (Feb. 1994) p. 221
[45] Dennis, *English Industrial Cities*, p. 22
[46] Pooley, Segregation or integration? p. 73

Research in a modern setting can offer new explanations for historical conduct.

The deviant behaviour of some clustered Irish was simply attributed to their cultural mores without any understanding of the effects that a dysfunctional neighbourhood has on the outlook of individuals residing therein. Their seeming contentment with overcrowded, dilapidated accommodation and their apparent unwillingness to self-reform was greeted by contemporary observers with dismay. But then it was not understood that not only was cultural difference in play but also the effects of social isolation. Social isolation amplifies the effects of living in an area of concentrated poverty. If residents consider their own neighbourhood to be disorganised this can lead to feelings of powerlessness, fatalism, isolation, and a state of anomie.[47]

Language and literacy may create barriers to employment and acceptability. Studies on language attitudes show that speech variation (dialect and accent) influence the view of the hearer regarding the speakers' socio-economic status, level of education, intelligence and competence.[48]
Barclay wrote:

> 'I was becoming English! I did not hate things Irish, but I began to feel that they must be put away; they were inferior to things English. How could it be otherwise? My pronunciation was jeered at,-mimicked, corrected. I pronounced Tea 'tay' like Alexander Pope used to do instead of pronouncing it 'tee' as your present-day speaker does. Outside the house everything was English: my catechism, lessons, prayers, songs, tales, games-'English, quite English'. Presently, I began to feel ashamed of the jeers and mockery and criticism, and tried to pronounce like the English.'[49]

According to the *Coventry Herald* 30th March 1849 at the Warwickshire Assizes, Coventry Division, Patrick Grogan was sentenced to twelve months for stealing clothes at Great Packington. The clothes were found by a policeman in the prisoner's house in Coventry. Grogan called three of his brothers, Owen, John and Michael with the father Pat and Kate Casey 'to give him a character, but the deep Irish brogue was of such a character that it nearly puzzled his Lordship to make anything of it'.

Studies show the actions and experiences of some Irish led to deeper than realised consequences. Alcohol use disorder among some Irish was frequently reported. Through prolonged exposure to alcohol the brain is damaged leading to psychosis or morbidity.[50] Also according to Craig Morgan there is very strong evidence that migrants tend to suffer higher rates of psychoses than most other groups, and these are social in origin. He notes the role of stress that all migrants face in transition from one country to another, unfamiliar cultural practices, challenging environment, troublesome interactions with the institutions of government, and the need for some to understand a different language. Some Irish migrants may have been unwell and have suffered from a genetic based predisposition to e.g. bipolar disorder.[51] Unstable behaviour during elevated episodes might be interpreted as 'Irish' behaviour. Herson put forward the

---

[47] William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass and Public Policy*, (Chicago 1987)
[48] Holly K. Carlson and Monica A. McHenry, Effect of accent and dialect on employability, *Journal of Employment Counseling*, Vol. 43 June 2006 pp. 70-83
[49] Barclay, *Memoirs and Medleys*, pp. 23, 24
[50] Yang, Zhongshu, Alcohol-Related Psychosis, in Medscape.
https://emedicine.medscape.com/article/289848-overview Accessed 10th February 2019
[51] Craig Morgan, Migration, Ethnicity, and Psychosis: Towards a Sociodevelopmental Model, *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, July 2010; 36 (4) pp. 655-664
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2894585/ Accessed 27th January 2019

view that some migrants who survived the Famine suffered not simply from stress but endured on-going trauma as a result of their ordeal. He wrote 'the violence, drunkenness and alienated behaviour frequently observed among the Irish could, in some individuals, be the only record we now have of deeper trauma'.[52] The *Coventry Standa*rd 14th August 1840 reported that 'John Bracken, an Irishman, who keeps an old clothes shop in GreyFriars' lane was charged with being drunk…[after being brought to] the watch-house, the prisoner broke off a large piece of wood…and with it endeavoured to knock down the walls of the prison; he also threatened to dash out the brains of such policemen as happened to have any, if they came near him. – Inspector Bromfield said his conduct was like that of a madman. – Prisoner said he certainly was mad at times, his head being quite broke open in three parts, and he had been hard at work and had drank rather too much…' Bracken had arrived in Coventry pre-Famine so the trauma Herson referred to did not affect him, but his behaviour in Coventry over many years was notorious and helped confirm the stereotype of the Irish being anti-social (Appendix 2).

The kind of stress that migrants could endure which was added to by the belief the Irish were not treated in the same manner as English, can be detected from a report in the *Coventry Standard* 3rd March 1865. It told that:

> 'James Mulloney was charged with attempting to commit suicide at the police-station. - P.C. Gadsby said: While on duty I found the defendant in the street, in a very excited state. He asked me to get him a night's lodging, and afterwards wished me to let him sit by the fire at the police-station. I took him into custody. I found in his pocket the letter I produce. It is as follows: - "Enclosed are my last words. I am going to commit suicide this night. I hope your father will forgive. An Irishman here is not treated as English…" It appeared from evidence given that the accused is a second-class assistant in the Inland Revenue Department, and that he had been guilty of some irregularities, which were under examination, and had evidently preyed upon his mind…and for a week he had taken large doses of opium with an intention to commit suicide.'

Second-generation migrants can face more acute forms of cultural dissonance than their parents. They face special difficulties that can result in patterns of adjustment that involve attempting to synthesize two cultures, or passing as a member of the group that is dominant, or developing a defensive identity. These were findings that related to Latinos in the USA.[53]

[52] Herson, *Divergent paths*, p. 16
[53] Carola and Marcelo Suarez-Orozco, *Children of Immigration*, (Harvard 2001)

Appendix 20

The Census of 1911

It may be contended that a long nineteenth century view should be taken when considering the appropriate duration period for investigation in this migration study. This is because there was a degree of cultural continuity that spilled over from the nineteenth into the early twentieth century, which would result in this study concluding at the outbreak of World War I. Thus, even though extracting the Irish from the 1911 census population of 106,931 is a most daunting task, the findings therefrom might offer an epiloguing function, and in an end of epoch fashion, better round off the migration cycle.

However by 1901 the arrival and adjustment of the Famine generation had been fully captured. Its subsequent generations dwelling in the twentieth century could not, especially by 1911, be readily identified.[1] Those Irish-born parents of the Famine generation, co-resident with adult children, who crucially served to flag-up the presence of their Coventry-born children in previous censuses, and hence gave a more embodied dimension to Irish settlement were practically all demised. One example of how embedded as British, in census terms for 1911, and 'lost' to the surface inspection as 'Irish', was the household of widower Martin Boyle, aged 50 years, a 'bricklayers labourer' born in Coventry who resided with his Coventrian-born daughter Ellen, 27 years, a cycle machinist. Investigation showed that in 1861 Martin was the 5 month old son of Darby Boyle a labourer from Ireland living in H9C10 Caldicott's Yard.[2]

Moreover, there was relatively profound change to the underlying social context which had already altered much since the 1830s when the Irish weavers arrived. Signally in the case of Coventry, there was an industrial-urban momentum from early in the twentieth century that was in essence modern, transformative and expansive in character. In the light of the distinctive augmentation of the city by early twentieth century industrial progress, which was the initial step in the development of fairly prolonged industrial prosperity in Coventry, that was admired nationwide, fresh Irish migrant arrival and adjustment in the twentieth century is better left to be contextualised within that new century Coventry setting. In this Victorian Age study, should the information on the Irish upsurge in the 1911 census be deeply explored, it would outline a happening of the Edwardian Age, that deviated from the normalcy of the previous century, and which would only appear as a dominating and tail-end phenomenon

---

[1] This 'dropout' was becoming apparent from the turn of the century. William and Elizabeth McCarthy at 11 Ellys Road in 1901 would not have drawn notice, on account of their non-Irish birthplaces. However on the occasion Thomas Hennessey (Appendix 2) was residing with his Coventrian daughter Elizabeth and son in-law, Barbadian-born William McCarthy. Without Thomas being present they would have been overlooked and were styled on the occasion as an *English Household containing Irish*. In fact William along with Elizabeth had Irish heritage, thereby helping to confirm the view that such heritage was a probable factor for the second generation uniting in marriage. William McCarthy appears in 1871 as the 7 year old son of Irish- born Michael McCarthy, Barrack Sargeant & Pensioner living in Bull Yard. His father had toured in Preston, Colchester, West Indies, Northampton and had arrived in Coventry some four years ago where his youngest daughter was born (RG10/3176.37.18 ED14). In the next census William was a cabinet maker (RG11/3067.69.19 ED14). In 1891 he resided with his parents at 8 Chester St. as a carpenter (RG12/2450.150.24 ED 26). In 1901 he was an employing builder & contractor married to Elizabeth in Ellys Road (RG13/2910.96.40 ED 4). In 1911 they had moved to Leamington where William was described as a building contractor and was employing 2 domestic servants (RG14/18748.307 ED 19).

[2] RG14/18549 ED 11; RG9/2206.25.15 ED 2. See Note 4

unbalancing the study theme.[3] There is in essence a more 'standalone' feel to the 1911 census relative to those previous which, although synoptic, had populations of interest to this study with a traceable through the decades aspect to them.

That being iterated, it would have been remiss to ignore the challenge, substantive though it is, of harvesting Irish details, since it is the only other census now available that is not restricted by the 100 year rule. Interrogation of the census is valuable to confirm the demise of the Irish-born post-Famine generation and to affirm the undetectability by 1911 of their local-born children, if sought by the method of mass-garnering of data based on Irish birthplace. It lengthens the period mentioned in Chapter 7 over which the liklehood of assimilation or intergenerational socio-economic change may be assessed. It usually allows a third-generation to become old enough to assume an occupation to make this assessment possible.[4] It provides perspective to this nineteenth century study by indicating the scale of a new infusion of Irish from more disparate locations than their nineteenth century forebears. It reveals how changed times and local circumstances would allow Irish, arriving now in a vibrant city, to have a more immediate and relatively dignified occupational and residential interplay with local society, and to express themselves in a more distributed pattern of settlement. It also shows that family-headed households and boarding remained the elemental form and process through which the Irish attained rapport with the city. It reveals the extent of exogamy by 1911, which apart from indicating the 'success' of their accommodation to local norms, suggests this was the primary reason that the Irish were not singled out for collective disfavour. Finally the 1911 census was the first to enquire on the length of time marriages had lasted, and also on total numbers of children born to married couples. This offers elucidation on the dynamic of marriage, beyond previous decennial passive statements that simply listed the number of children co-residing with a household head. In requiring more specific birthplace detail, it corrects to a large extent the practice of respondents providing the general place name 'Ireland', and has thus more accurately reveals the diversity of Irish county of origin.

Since the boundary of Registration District 390 for Coventry, did not change between the census of 1901 and 1911, aggregates for the 1911 census are directly relatable to 1901. The total population in 1901 was 70,296 which increased by a remarkable 52.1% over the next decade to 106,931. This would see strong residential development and affect the intimacy of the city. McGrory referring to Coventry in the early years of the twentieth century draws attention to the remarks made circa 1916 by Dan Claridge, who was owner of the Craven Arms. Compared to ten or fifteen years ago when Dan said he could not walk around Coventry without being recognised and pleasantly greeted, now he was surprised if he met anyone who knew him. 'It's gone sir,

---

[3] There was more overspill of population to the east and north beyond the area that had remained constant during the nineteenth century; this nineteenth century areal consistency had allowed precise intercensal comparison of figures.

[4] This is possible only where family details can be alligned over a number of censuses. An example which illustrates what is attainable, and which shows proletarian intergenerational stagnation and residential movement, is that of Darby Boyle and his descendants (referred to in Appendix 2 in relation to P. McDonnell). Darby was an agricultural labourer residing in lowly Caldicott's Yard, West Orchard in 1861. (See Table 3.15). RG9/2206.25.15 ED 2. He died age 49 in 1874 (Civil Registration Death Index 1837-1915, Warwickshire 6d p. 359). In 1881 his son Martin (who was born in 1861) was a bricklayers labourer resident not too far away in 2 Grove Street. RG12/2450.6.5 ED 17. In 1901 Martin was resident in 8C Well Street, a yard with long Irish association, with his 2 daughters and 10 year old son Tom. RG13/2910.11.16 ED 1. In 1911 Martin was a 50 year old widower, still a bricklayers labourer and had moved had moved outwards to Cross St. RG14/18549 ED 11. He died in 1913. In 1911 Tom was a 19 year old boarder in 15 Brighton Street, a carter drawing bricks for a brickworks. RG14/18568 ED 30. He died aged 51 in 1943. (Civil Registration Death Index 1837-1915, Warwickshire 6d p. 812).
From this account there is some disseverance to be noted in the experience of long-settled Irish and that reported for the 'new' Irish, i.e. Irish-born who arrived around turn of the century.

the old Coventry spirit; its dead; it don't exist anymore, the day when we all knew each other, like a happy family, that day is past; and today, why sir, Coventry is a city of foreigners. It's the influx that did it, sir. Fifteen years ago the influx began, and its been keeping on ever since - Scotch, Irish, Welsh, and God knows what else - all foreigners.' McGrory placing foreigners in parenthesis stated they arrived as an influx from all over Britain attracted by burgeoning industries.[5] Walters noted that Claridge voiced the prejudice that was felt by many in Coventry at these newcomers altering the old city. [6] The industry that drew them, was motor car production which expanding rapidly from the final years of the nineteenth century, with Daimler and Humber becoming known nationwide. Likewise Herbert Engineering had national standing. Courtaulds opened in 1904 to make artificial silk [rayon]. In 1905 plans were drawn for the Coventry Ordnance Company to operate in Red Lane. In 1908 Coventry was referred to as 'a city of artisans and the smaller middle class', one symptom of which was the appearance of the streets 'thronged with sudden swarms of factory hands as the dinner hour booms from the clock tower'.[7] The increase in population encouraged house building which offered work to skilled and unskilled labourers, and afforded more work opportunity such as coal carting. The expansion in infrastructure provided jobs in gas and water supply. Increased tertiary activity e.g. in teaching, nursing, transport and hospitality also attracted migrants. The availability of work for all, as well as the city's diverse draw-in probably protected the Irish from insinuations of their taking jobs from locals, or from being isolated as prominent 'outsiders'. Irish in day-to-day situations were no longer easily categorized as part of a distinctly traited group. The profound degree of inter-marriage in Coventry noted below must have indicated that belittlement of individual Irish was neither wanted nor deserved. Those arriving from Ireland were more diverse in character and status, originating not only from the old nursery counties but also more conspicuously from northern counties of Ireland. The Irish-born quantum in Coventry consisted not only of unfledged migrants arriving directly from Ireland, but also of culturally British 'accidental' Irish, born to parents on military service in Ireland, and of Irish seasoned to British ways through having worked already in other British cities, or having married non-Irish.[8] As Charles Daly's record below indicates, the Irish of even one generation remove from Ireland had occupations that provided positive visibility through social connections or civic functions e.g. as a fire brigade volunteer or water turncock for the city corporation, that gave validity to the notion that those of Irish background (and not only those of professional standing) could be conventional and acculturated. In the quickly expanding city spatial area, the Irish were more residentially scattered thus, they had less temptation to remain culturally distant which was a phenomenon that residential clustering might facilitate.[9] There was also in the city for Catholics, the congeniality of religious tolerance about which Father Mackey remarked at the annual dinner of the Catholic Young Men's Society in 1909. 'It was the fate of Catholics in many cities to be misunderstood. Here in Coventry, in the centre of England, they were understood.' D.M. Mason M.P., in October 1913 congratulated Coventry that Protestant and Catholic could live in the city in entire harmony adding

[5] McGrory, *Coventry*, pp. 243, 244
[6] Walters, *The Story of Coventry*, p. 206
[7] *Coventry Herald* 6th June 1908
[8] Incidents could be noted of army personnel with Irish association, who were e.g. stationed in nearby Warwick, seeking work in Coventry on discharge. Later mentioned are two examples of families who came from the city of Leicester to work in Coventry.
[9] Though more residentially diffuse, many Irish lived in walking-distance proximity due to the strong pattern of closely arranged uniform streets of terraced houses around central Coventry.

'there are some cities in England where there is unfortunately great bitterness, great rioting, and sometimes even bloodshed between the extreme sections of either faith.'[10]

There also existed in the early twentieth century, an occurrence beyond the capacity of census enquiry to detect. This was an increased sense of dignity and self-assurance among those possessing Irish heritage. This expressed itself in a desire to celebrate Irish culture, seek a Gaelic revival and to gather at the annual St Patrick's Day grand concerts in the Baths Assembly Hall, Priory Street. There was also on a city-wide basis a growth in consciousness of the need for the Irish to combine for mutual support and to collectively promote themselves.[11] Notices regarding St. Patrick's Day concerts indicated that they were held under the auspices of the Gaelic League until 1908; thereafter the United Irish League organized them.[12] The cause of Ireland gave particular focus to Irish associational culture. From the election in 1906 and evident from September 1907 onwards, there was a more forthright Irish presence and purposeful interest in actively using the political machine, and in influencing politicians and public opinion in order to advance the national cause.[13] The United Irish League in Coventry, believing strongly in constitutional methods and the reasonableness of the nationalist cause, sought to drive support away from the Tories they despised, and towards the Liberal Party and the Irish Parliamentary Party under John Redmond in

---

[10] *Coventry Herald* 30th April 1909; *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 31st October 1913. It may be argued such comments might have been cordial generalities expected of the occasion. However the observations reflected a comfortable reality of acceptance, certainly at civic dignatory level. The *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 28th December 1905 reported that the older Catholic folk of Coventry were invited to an excellent meal in St. Osburg's provided by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The Mayor Alderman Drinkwater attended as did Councillor McGowran [both Liberals]. In saying how pleased all were at the attendance of the Mayor, McGowran remarked this was the first occasion since the Reformation that any Mayor had ever attended in an official capacity. It would take a further quarter of a century before the Catholics of Coventry were fully acknowledged by ceremonious and dignified officialdom. This occurred according to the *Herald* 24th November 1928 when on Mayor's Sunday a Pontifical High Mass was held in St. Osburg's. The Abbot of Douai W.E. Kelly President of the English Benedictine Congregation presided and Abbot Bamford preached the sermon. The Mayor, accompanied by many city councilors and officials, was A.J. Makepeace, who the paper said was the first Roman Catholic Mayor of the city since the Reformation. The paper noted that 'both the Abbots like the Mayor are natives of Coventry, their fathers having been in business here'. It reported 'The church was crowded for it is apparent that Coventry Roman Catholics appreciate the honour conferred upon Alderman Makepeace'. Bamford remarked in the course of his sermon rejoicing on the selection of Makepeace that 'Roman Catholics knew from sad experience that very often their religion was a bar to promotion, and that often times a person who was suited for a certain post was set aside simply because he was a Catholic'. Makepeace was a Liberal councillor and a dental surgeon of long standing. Abbot Kelly was called a Coventry native; his Irish background, noted in Table 4.6, was not raised.
The *Herald* 26th April 1907 reported that the annual dinner meeting of the CYMS was attended by a number of councillors [all Liberals] and by the Mayor William Lee [Liberal], who was a member of the Board of Managers of St. Mary's School.
Mason's comments were made, during a period of Church expansion in Coventry, at a bazaar which was held in order to raise funds for the new St Elizabeth's Catholic church, presbytery and schools in Foleshill.

[11] The first articulation of the consciousness of community was given in the *Telegraph* 18th March 1903 when the Coventry branch of the Gaelic League gave as its objective the promotion of the Irish language and literature and 'directly concerning Coventry, the union of the Irish residing in Coventry and district for their social and mutual welfare'.

[12] *Coventry Telegraph* 18th March 1909. Nation League was renamed the United Irish League in 1891.

[13] The denizens of Coventry may not have been aware of the activities of the United Irish League on a societal scale, nor might the League wish to enlighten them on all its activities.
There was greater reportage in Birmingham newspapers about the strident comments made at League meetings in Ireland and Britain, and also about boycotting and cattle driving operations. There was no mention in Coventry print of the antics of the Catholic Federation and the dictation of 'English priests' as to the party Irish Catholics should vote for, which caused such annoyance to the United Irish League in 1908 (The *Scotsman* 8th June 1908; *Leicester Daily Post* 1st June 1909; *Irish News and Belfast Morning News* 15th January 1910).

order to obtain Home Rule.[14] The campaigns of the United Irish League in helping secure in Coventry the election of Liberals, A.E.W. Mason in 1906, and D.W. Mason in 1910, where a swing of a thousand votes between parties could ensure victory, remains beyond scope of this Appendix. While the Liberal Party supported Home Rule there was the risk of tension with it and Catholic Church followers over its approach to the management of Catholic schools, thereby raising the question for Catholics of Irish descent, as to whether they should vote Conservative in elections.[15] At the annual meeting of the CYMS in 1906 A.H. Barnacle its president said 'they had heard a great deal about the big fight which was coming on for their schools, and he hoped that when the time came Catholics would be ready to defend their schools. They were determined to teach their own children in their own religion in their own schools.' A resolution was passed calling on the Society 'to support our clergy in any steps they think best to take in the interests of our holy religion'.[16]

Beyond scope in an Appendix is deep investigation into the disposition of Coventrians before 1911 towards Home Rule, and by inference the United Irish League, and also the wider context of the struggle for Home Rule against Unionist opposition early in the century.[17] What can be noted was the cultural self-satisfaction and strength of populist patriotism evident in Coventry at the parade in 1902 commerating Lady Godiva and celebrating the coronation of King Edward VII.[18] Though good natured in its celebration, such an assertive climate of hegemony must have remained long in the air and created a deferential attitude among the general Irish and a hesitancy to contrarily articulate on Irish related current issues in their workplace. The Irish may have realized that as long as they were seen to know their hierarchial station within the latent 'superior British/inferior Irish' placing of the popular mind, and were considered not to have strayed outside the nostrums of their largely working-class social placing they were locally acceptable. Their acceptability on conformation was recognised by O'Day and referred to in Chapter 7.

It remains unclear if the United Irish League achieved the support of all Irish in the city in the absence of information on the number of Irish who over time, became

---

[14] These were weekly meetings initially held in the Lord Aylesford, Aylesford Street, which was managed by C. McGowran. They moved to a new room in the Elastic Inn, Ford Street, in October. Lectures of Irish relevance were arranged and monthly concerts were organized according to the *Telegraph* 20th September and 21st October 1907. The *Herald* 22nd April 1910 reported that new club rooms would be opened the following month in New Street. According to the *Herald* 31st January 1913 Redmond visited Coventry to make the case for Home Rule following the passage of the third reading of the Bill. He was invited by the Coventry Liberal Association and enthusiastically received. He was similarly received when he, later in the evening, visited the Irish Club in New Street where L.J. Daly took the chair.

[15] A controversial letter appeared in the *Herald* 3rd January 1906 after Liberal, Mason's election agent, Howes in expressing gratitude for receiving the Catholic vote, implied that it was an Irish Catholic vote. A letter written by 'An English Catholic' disputed this, in short, stating that 75% of Catholics voted for the Conservative candidate Foster. This was quickly refuted in a letter signed by E. Maloney, T. Burke, W. Kinsella and L.J. Daly who described themselves as Irish Catholics. (*Telegraph* 22nd January 1906). There was an election in January 1910 which the Liberal, Silas Hocking lost to Conservative J.K. Foster. Coventry clergy expressed their annoyance in the papers that a group set itself up without the knowledge of the church as a 'deputation of Coventry Catholics' and tried to influence the vote of Catholics. The clergy were keen that the Church would not be perceived as taking sides. It is not clear who comprised the 'deputation' but it appears to be a group making mischief against Hocking. (*Telegraph* 17th January 1910).

[16] *Coventry Telegraph* 23rd April 2006

[17] The significance of: the 'crowd', processional culture (which Coventry enjoyed), the origin of factors that shaped the British character, the Unionist alignment with old British standings, the geographical variation in anti-Irish/Catholic prejudice, the level of interest in Irish matters by the public at large and the depth of concern among political parties to address the Home Rule issue, are expertly considered in: Jackson, *Popular opposition to Irish Home Rule* pp. 3-35.

[18] British Film Institute, Lady Godiva Procession 1902, https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-lady-godiva-procession-in-coventry-1902-1902-online Accessed 19th September 2018

hybrid in outlook, or apathetic towards their heritage, or not interested in the great questions of the period, and on those who did not frame their identity around a calling for nationalistic gesture.[19] Also absent to enable assessment are consistent accounts of responses regarding their affinity with Ireland's cause from: Irish in the social elite with greater class-based identity, Irish who might have favoured militant action, Unionist Irish, or those Irish who saw themselves primarily as Catholics rather than as nationalists.[20] Irish members of e.g. the Catholic teaching profession, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Catholic Benefit Society, or Catholic Young Men's Society may have found their complete need for social acceptance fulfilled in a Catholic ambience that operated within a milieu that promoted iconic sporting aspects of host culture.[21] The latter mentioned Society retained a dedicated rugby team and a cricket team whose annual celebratory dinners were attended by Catholic clergy and local dignitaries.[22] In this context, even by his simple attendance at such gatherings, councillor, J.P. and prominent Catholic, R.J. Halpin, who was a staunch Unionist, may have had a neutralizing influence on ambitious nationalism for such Irish Catholics (Appendix 2).[23]

The fact that there was a also a set of newspaper accounts covering the Society may leave an impression of it and the United Irish League having two different mindsets. There was a materializing divide, in that the St. Osburg's schoolrooms which had been a common location for gatherings of Catholic agencies such as the Young Men's Society and for those engaged in cultural Irish activities were being relinquished by the latter from early in the century in favour of Baths Assembly Hall, or the Irish club rooms in New Street from 1910.[24] However there was still likely to have been mental concurrence for many Irish between their Catholic adherence and enthusiasm for Ireland's national advance. Yet it is difficult to be convinced of this. Although there was some overlap e.g. in the case of L.J. Daly, different sets of individual were listed at Catholic related functions and at those of the United Irish League, which were very much comprised by those who did manual work.

---

[19] In this regard a phrase used in the *Telegraph* 7th June 1917 in relation to William Kell (See Note 45) seems apt to describe the interlaced encounters of Irish persons at this time. It said that he 'was well-known in local Irish circles'. Figures that indicate the amount of those who were 'active' in some Irish fashion: 250 members of the United Irish League in 2014 according to the *Telegraph* 28th April 2014, 300 approx. attendees of the St. Patrick's Day annual ball in 1910 as reported in the *Telegraph* 18th March 1910, 500 approx. claimed in the *Telegraph* 3rd January 1910 as the size of the Irish vote in 1910.

[20] An inkling that not all approved of the behaviour of the League, or that it only attracted persons of a certain social class might be taken from a report in the *Telegraph* 3rd February 1908 which stated the League at their weekly meeting discussing the duties of Irishmen in general and influential Irishmen in particular. A unanimous decision was made that Mr. Maloney and Mr J.F. Keegan represent the branch in interviewing the influential Irishmen of Coventry as regards their attitude respecting the United Irish League. Were they thinking of William and J.E. McGowran who appeared to keep their distance? Perhaps they looked to Birmingham where Dr E.R. Hennessy and Dr T. Murphy fronted the League. Hennessy (1864-1913) from Galbally, Limerick died in Hatton Asylum relatively young. Cork-born Murphy (1873-1916) also died at an early age (RG13/2711. 90.27 ED 26; RG13/2837.91.1 ED 49).

[21] The *Telegraph* on 7th April 1905 stated there were 170 or 180 members of the CYMS. The *Herald* on 30th April 1909 stated there were 200 members of the CYMS.

[22] *Coventry Telegraph* 7th November 1900

[23] The overall absence of consistent accounts of what 'common people' thought about issues of the day is bemoaned by Jackson in his Edwardian Age study. He observed: 'apart from the ballot box, the views of the 'common man' are seemingly inscrutable: his diaries and personal reminiscences are exceedingly rare'. (Jackson, *Popular opposition to Irish Home Rule*, p. 4). There was public interest in the question of Home Rule as evidenced by the presence of 2,000 or more people in the Drill Hall in Coventry to hear an address by John Redmond in 1913 (*Telegraph* 27th January 1913). The *Telegraph* 4th May 1914 reported that 4,300 persons were present in the Drill Hall to hear A.J. Balfour speak at a meeting held under the auspices of the Coventry Conservative and Unionist Association. Father Placid Rea was on the platform of the former meeting and Councillor Halpin was on the platform of the latter.

[24] Irish political activity meetings were never permitted in the Coventry schoolrooms.

It is to be asked if these United League members were 'recently' arrived Irish or part of an embedded generation. In some cases the Irish link is not immediately apparent. L.J. Daly, President or Chairman over a number of years of the United Irish League (and who had previously presided over Irish Social and Literary Society gatherings in 1901) was born in Coventry in 1867, the second son of Charles Daly (1832-1918) who was born in Hull. However further research shows Charles' father, born 1805, was Irish.[25] The United Irish League committee names would change over the years but the listing given in the *Telegraph* on 17th September 1907 shows that many were British-born with an Irish parent or grandparent.[26]

The Coventry League believed that Home Rule had been achieved by the end of October 1914.[27]

Before addressing the aggregative statistics of the census, a brief reveal of some of the households encountered in 1911 illustrates, that contained within the term Irish, was a diversity of origin which was reflected in marriage partnerships, together with the variety of experience of households, in terms of their pathway to, and present position on the family life cycle. A few households contained an aged Irish-born member. Still alive, though not for long after the census, they provided vital evidence in census searches for the existence of a family that had Irish background, but without presence of the aged member, would in census birthplace terms be only recognisable as English. Such was Sligo born Ellen McDonald, 70 year old mother of Mary, the 38 year old Coventry-born wife of Coventrian Arthur Mason who all resided at 4 Oxford Street.[28]

---

[25] Francis Daly (1805-1879) was water turncock for Coventry (RG 9/2207.76.21 ED 13). An executor of his will was Thomas Hennessey, boot maker, a fact which shows there existed solid friendships and trusting links among the Irish that may not be immediately suspected (England & Wales, National Probate Calendar, Index of Wills and Administrations 1879 p. 13). The *Coventry Standard* 11th October 1918 said at the death of Charles Daly (1832-1918) that he 'was a well-known citizen. He was associated with the work of the local Philantrophic Society movement in its early days, and was one of the first members of the Coventry Fire Brigade. For many years he was in the service of the Water Department of the Coventry Corporation.' It may be mentioned that Louis James (1867-1940) died 14th November 1940 following the German bombing of Coventry.

[26] The United Irish League committee names given in the *Telegraph* on 17th September 1907 was as follows with supplemental information gleaned from the 1911 census in brackets:
President, L.J. Daly (44 years, Clerk (coal merchant), Coventry, grandfather Irish); vice-chairman; J. Keegan (background uncertain, had emigrated to USA by 1911); treasurer, C. McGowran; (36 years, Licensed Victualler, born in Derby to William McGowran [Appendix 2], grandparents both from Ireland); secretary, P.H.Cullen (33 years, Motor car fitter, Dublin); committee members: H. McNeill (34 years, Engine fitter, motor trade, Coventry, both parents from Mayo); W. Kinsella, (29 years, Engine fitter, motor trade, Coventry, both grandparents born in Dublin); E. Mo(a)loney, (44 years, tinsmith, London, father Irish); J. Connolly (70 years, Tailor 1871, Kilkarney (sic) Ire); M. McCormick, (27 years, Bolton, Engine smith silk mill, father Irish); J. Ivens, Coventry (35 years, Builder, neither parents or grandparents Irish), H. Mullarkey, (Not identified), P. Cavanagh (Possibly 31 years, Birmingham, both parents Irish); W.J. Ryan (found 1881 census, 36 years in 1911, Coventry, father Irish); J. Needham (26 years, Artificial silk spinner Westport); T. Harley (Not identified); J. Loftus, (possibly 43 years, Wolverhampton, both parents Irish); T. Quinn (39 years, Sheet metal worker, Wolverhampton, parents not located); and R. Dougherty (45 years, Bricklayers labourer, Wolverhampton, both parents were Irish).

[27] The *Herald* told of a dinner on 31st October 1914 that members of the United League club arranged at their premises to celebrate the passing of the Home Rule Bill. In 1916 they were shocked and outraged that the 'Sinn Fein' violent uprising had occurred in Ireland. The *Coventry Telegraph* 29th April 1916 reported special interest attaches to a general meeting of the Coventry Branch of the United Irish League which has been held. Mr J. Collins presided and a proposition was unanimously carried, according hearty support to Mr John Redmond in his attitude towards the Sinn Fein revolt. It was also decided to send the following telegram to Mr Redmond -
" The members of the Coventry Branch of the U.I.L. assure you of their hearty agreement with you in your condemnation of the Sinn Fein revolt, and are satisfied that you have the confidence of the overwhelming majority of Irish people."

[28] Ellen died in 1913. RG14/18560.199 ED 22; Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915, Warwickshire 6d p. 660

Showing similar resilience into the century until 1912 was Mary Mander, 76 year old mother of co-residing George Mander, at 28 Spon End, who she had given birth to in Coventry 49 years earlier. The family had by 1911, through George's age and positioning as head, in terms of this study's classification, transited from an *Irish Household* in 1861 to an *English household containing Irish*.[29] The denouement of the nineteenth century influx could be detected in the situation of Patrick Mortimer and his wife Catherine Mortimer both of whom were recorded in the workhouse where the former died in 1911. His retreat to the workhouse seemed to sum up for himself and for some others of his generation, born in the horrific Ireland of 1845, an inability to escape proletarian stagnation over a lifetime in Coventry, his exploits involved drunken and disorderly behaviour, and running a lodging house (Appendix 2).[30] Respected nineteenth century stock was also in its final years. Irish-born Richard Halpin would succumb in 1915. A widower of 81 years he lived in Lord Street with his daughter Mary Edith. Back in 1871 as a watch glass maker with Irish-born Ellen Halpin he was then parent of 7 children (six born in Coventry) including the above mentioned Robert J. Halpin.[31] Representing those who had directly arrived in Coventry about a decade earlier was Joseph Moore, 52 years, an engineer's clerk who lived in 10 Godiva Street with his wife and four children all born in Belfast.[32] At 20 Paynes Lane, Peter Ward, 57 years, a tyre stamper, lived in a household of 7, all except the youngest had moved to Coventry from Mayo about 1899.[33] Exampling a family that did not migrate directly to Coventry was that of John Heasley, 33 years, a foreman fitter from Downpatrick married to a woman from Belfast where they had 2 children. They had a further three in Barrow-in-Furness before arriving to reside at 46 Oliver Street, Coventry within 3 years of 1911.[34] Michael Connolly, 38 years, from Heywood in Lancashire was married to Ellen from Mayo and lived at 13 Carmelite Road. They had 3 children in Heywood before all coming to Coventry about 1906, to enable Michael to work as a mechanic. They took in 2 Irish boarders, one from Limerick and another from Westport.[35] At 47 Weston Street lived Thomas Manning, 44 years, a blacksmith from Enniscorthy, Co Wexford. His wife was from Bolton Lancashire where they had 2 children. They moved to London where a further two children were born, then to Leicester where a child was born, before reaching Coventry for the birth of a final daughter in 1910.[36] Another arrival from Leicester, in the last six years, was Thomas Folliard, a 43 year old, Irish-born bricklayer's labourer who lived at H9C13 St. John Street with his wife and four children all Leicestrian-born (See Figure 3.6).[37] Along with above three examples of mixed marriages is another which also was a recent one. This was of John Kelly, a 32 year old Dublin Carpenter to Coventry-born Mary. They lived at 81 Aldbourne Road with their four young children the eldest being four years old.[38]

The Census

The 623 Irish-born represented 0.58% of the Registration District enumeration of 106,931. This was a significant decennial increase of 49.4% % on the 417 located in

[29] Mary passed away in 1912. RG9/2206.24.13 ED 2; Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915, Warwickshire 6d p. 879
[30] Patrick Mortimer: RG14/18538.12 ED 29
[31] Richard Halpin: RG10/3178.96.27 ED 35; RG12/2451.117.13 ED 35; RG14/18532 ED 22; England and Wales Civil Registration Death Index, Warwickshire 6d p. 800
[32] Joseph Moore: RG14/18512.98 ED 2
[33] Peter Ward: RG14/18560.66 ED 22
[34] John Heasley: RG14/18553.379 ED 15
[35] Michael Connolly: RG14/18513.330 ED 3. See Note 40.
[36] Thomas Manning: RG14/18549.172 ED 11
[37] Thomas Folliard: RG14/18517.199 ED 7
[38] John Kelly: RG14/18542.196 ED 4

1901. The trajectory was to continue upwards with 1,079 recorded in 1921. The city distribution of Irish-born is shown in Map A.20.2 and Table A.20.1. The 'Institutions' below furnished in total 50 Irishcom which included 49 Irish-born, but were too unwieldy, complex or large to process under a household head arrangement. Again some were not standard households and those with more than 10 lodgers were likewise considered irregular in this census. As the list shows boarders which were a significant feature of the 1911 census could be found in common lodging houses, or houses with the head described as a Boarding house keeper, or with families who took in some boarders.

'Institutions'
Irish 1911: Irishcom 1,353 Irish-born 623
Of 114 residents of the Barracks: Irishcom 8 (Irish-born 8)
Of 581 residents of the Workhouse: Irishcom 10 (Irish-born 10)
Of 141 occupants of the City Hospital: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 85 occupants of Gulson Common Lodg. House, 150 Spon St: Irishcom 7 (Irish-born 7)
Of 57 occupants of 'Smith's' lodging house, 47 Well St: Irishcom 4 (Irish-born 4)
Of 40 occupants of Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital: Irishcom 2 (Irish-born 2)
Of 34 occupants of Pegg's boarding house, 90 Gosford St: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 24 occupants of Mrs Dellows, 46 Warwick Lane: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 22 occupants of Albert Tandy house, White Friars Lane: Irishcom 2 (Irish-born 2)
Of 22 occupants of Clara Smith's boarding house, 69 Gosford St: Irishcom 2 (Irish-born 2)
Of 19 occupants of No 1 Spreadeagle Yard, West Orchard: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 19 occupants of Kings Head Hotel: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 16 occupants of Mrs Rolfe's School, 3 Quadrant: Irishcom 3 (Irish-born 3)
Of 15 occupants of Ivy House 17 King St: Irishcom 2 (Irish-born 1)
Of 15 occupants of St. Joseph's Convent: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 15 occupants of Eliza Rhodes' boarding house, 164 Spon St: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 11 occupants of Ford's Hospital: Irishcom 1 (Irish-born 1)
Of 4 occupants of R C Schools, 52 Raglan St: Irishcom 2 (Irish-born 2)

Irish Households
In the 1911 census there were 253 *Irish Households* with 1,066 Irishcom that included 359 Irish-born. *Irish Households comprised* 220 married couples and 33 other-headed households. The 'permanence' of settlement of married couples as opposed to single boarders is not apparent, although the necessity for a couple to rent a house after marriage meant couples had to make a somewhat more formal commitment to staying in the locality. In presenting Table A.20.2 the crudity of the division between households which is based on Irish or non-Irish birthplace, to suggest the varying degree of 'Irishness' of households has been recognised and addressed in Chapter 5.

Table A.20.2	***Irish Households* 1911**		
Household by birthplace			
Irish-born/ Irish-born	**Irish-born/ Irishcom**	**Irishcom/ Irish-born**	**Irish-born Solo Heads**
32	**92**	**96**	**33**
Birthplace detail of male heads			
County of birth > 1: 2 Antrim, 2 Down, 7 Dublin, 5 Mayo, 2 Roscommon, 2 Wexford	County of birth > 5: 9 Antrim, 8 Cork, 7 Down, 16 Dublin, 5 Kildare, 6 Mayo, 4 Roscommon, 6 Westmeath	Place of Birth: 39 Coventry, 13 Warwickshire, 39 elsewhere in Britain	Widow 16 Widower 6 M Male 4 Unm Male 3 M Female 3 Unm Female 1
Boarders			
4 Ind	3 Ind	2 Ind 2 families	

Number of Head families according to their size, delineated by birthplace of head (Family size to include parent(s) and only unmarried co-resident children) Max number in family ever achieved in 1911 by size shown in italics

Size	Number						
1							**14**
2	**11**	*10*	**18**	*17*	**26**	*27*	**9**
3	**6**	*3*	**18**	*15*	**16**	*10*	**4**
4	**5**	*5*	**19**	*14*	**14**	*13*	**2**
5	**4**	*3*	**14**	*10*	**16**	*11*	**2**
6	**4**	*3*	**7**	*8*	**7**	*8*	**1**
7	**1**		**8**	*6*	**5**	*4*	
8		*2*	**5**	*5*	**6**	*9*	**1**
9		*1*	**1**	*5*	**3**	*5*	
10	**1**	*3*	**2**	*5*	**1**	*3*	
11				*2*	**1**		
12		*2*		*1*		*1*	
13&>				*4*	**1**	*5*	

The degree of intermarriage by 1911 is patent in the Table and was almost balanced between Irish-born men marrying Irishcom women and the reverse. The Table, a synoptic view in 1911, shows the majority of families were of a size 5 or smaller. However the census of 1911 first revealed the number of children born from the marriage to the date of census, and by adding the two parents the household head family maximum size ever achieved by 1911 can be provided, which is shown in italics in the Table.[39] It is to be observed that household families were not generally large with the number of household parents who had more than 3 or 4 children born to them by 1911 noticeably decreasing with each subsequent birth. In fact 31 Irish households in 1911 comprised just the married couple, with only 3 of these ever having children. Dublin was the pre-eminent place of birth for Irish-born male heads, while Mayo, Roscommon, Cork and Belfast also featured.

[39] Not all would necessarily be living together by 1911. The figures would include some who had subsequently died.

Table A.20.3 Length of time in years that marriages of *Irish Household* heads had been in existence in 1911									
Time	0 < 5	5 < 10	10 < 15	15 < 20	20 < 25	25 < 30	30 < 40	40 < 50	50 < 58
Number	43	49	40	29	20	14	11	6	3

From Table Table A.20.3 it can be ascertained that 42.8 % of marriages occurred within the previous decade thus there would be many families where young children were being reared, which accounts for the high proportion of married women who did not provide occupational details. There were 31 *Irish Household* sons and daughters Irish-born; 5 of these were deemed to have been 'accidental Irish' due to their birth in Ireland while an English parent was on tour in an army barracks or naval base. Almost half the 33 solo-headed households were, as has been seen in previous censuses, widows. Boarders staying in these households amounted to 12 Irish-born and 7 more Irish associated, and a further 60 Non-Irish; solo-headed households took in no Irish-born. The majority of the Irish-born were single: 7 males and 1 female. Table A.20.1 shows the distribution of all Irish-born boarders.

English Households containing Irish

These households arose for inspection because resident within them were children, relatives, boarders or servants of the head who were Irish-born. In these households 215 Irish-born (237 Irishcom) were found. There were 177 *English Households containing Irish*: 116 were headed by married couples, all but one of which was male headed, 35 by widows, 5 by widowers, 2 by solo married males, 3 by solo unmarried males, 5 by solo married females, 9 by solo unmarried females, and 2 where the head lived elsewhere.

A remarkable 44 sons and daughters of English heads were born in Ireland. Place names such as Rathmines, Inchicore, Athlone and Kildare that featured, were locations of military barracks, while the fact some of these children had siblings born e.g. in Malta confirmed they were children of soldiers who had been on tour. Table A.20.1 shows their distribution coupled with that of another 5 children mentioned above from *Irish Households* who could be identified as having a military parent.

The degree of community interweave is also apparent in the number of Irish-born boarders kept by these households. Staying in these households were 118 Irish-born and 11 more Irish associated and a further 192 Non-Irish. Table A.20.1 shows the distribution of Irish-born boarders. There was no subconscious bias shown on census boarding lists of any widespread recording of the Irish last among boarders, but it is to be acknowledged that if households refused to accept Irish it would not be obvious either from the census. There did not appear to be a reluctance to take Irish-born, and on deep investigation it might be discovered that the landlord had an Irish pedigree which eased acceptance. Albert Muphy and his wife Ann took in 4 Irish boarders in 37 Dorset Road (Area 33 Map A.20.1). Albert was born in Birmingham, and his father James in Derby, but his grandfather Patrick was a general labourer from Ireland.[40] There appears to have been a natural residential sifting where lower-orders of more unsettled Irish would reside in less salubrious but cheaper common boarding houses. The Irish were accepted as borders because they had regular income from working in reliable manufactories and works known to all. They helped raise the income of the householder who in most cases was a tenant paying rent for a house. Further, some Irish-born boarders seem to have worked in the same manufacturies as the household head and

[40] RG14/18532 ED 4; HO107/2142.174.3 ED 1h; Albert Murphy was a 33 year old cycle finisher. All the boarders in 1911 were young single men, artificial silk spinners, 3 were from Mayo and 1 from Roscommon. The 1913 OS Map, Warwickshire, Sheet 21.08 shows the 'older' Courtaulds Factory close-by between the canal bridge on the Foleshill Road and the turn off from the same road by Lockhurst Lane. It opened in 1905 and closed in 1936. The 'newer' works in Little Heath opened in 1926.

being known to the head their suitability as tenants was already assured.[41] The vast majority of boarders were single: 89 males, 7 females. Servants (to e.g. grocers, or pork butchers), assistants, housekeepers and some nurses totalled 19.

A myriad of occupations across a wide spectrum was engaged in by 297 Irish-born.[42] At one end Dublin-born Benjamin Tuke was a manufacturer of tyres (Appendix 2), John O'Farrell from Dublin was a physician and surgeon, as was Andrew St Lawrance Burke from Roscommon (Appendix 2). Richard Tighe Harmon from Ballinasloe was an Assistant Surgeon in the Hospital while John Belcher from Bandon was Principal of the Technical Institute. At the other end Patrick Henry was recorded as a 28 year old Irish-born unemployed labourer.

On this occasion there has been no attempt to use occupation to determine socio-economic class which was a practice when employed in previous censuses that lent to a swollen and less than informative cumulation in Class 3. Also this avoids the difficulty of having to attempt to decide whether a skilled, semi-skilled or an unskilled work category was appropriate in industrial settings, on encountering ambiguous self-descriptions of occupation. Occupation has been presented according to the coding allocated to each occupation by the census analysts in 1911. The coding permits grouping of occupations and thus can inform on the the degree of immersion by the Irish in typical Coventry industrial categories.

The Irish-born engaged in a wide range of occupations. For example, a look at all Irish-born coded in the range from 441 to 494 revealed: 441 was an assistant master in a public secondary school, from Castle Bellingham, Louth; 451 was a book and print artist, from Derry; 457 was a land surveyor from Enniskillen; 463 was involved in the Prentice photo process at a general printers, from Fermoy; 466 was an actor from Cork city in town with 2 other actors; 469 was a Coventry City F.C. professional footballer, from Belfast; 483 was a medical dispensary collector, from Macroom; 483 was a hospital secretary, from Dublin; 483 was a school porter, from Dublin; 492 covered 2 cycle agents from Warrenpoint and from Portrush, and a rubber factors assistant, from Co Monaghan; and finally 494 included 2 travellers from Pettigo, Co Donegal and from Dublin.

---

[41] Area 3 showed:
10 St. Georges Rd Edward Fogarty, 28, family of two, 6 rooms, Draper & Tailor's Traveller from Pettigo, Co Donegal: *Boarder* - Johanna O'Callaghan, 26, School Teacher for Coventry Corporation from Banteer, Co Cork.
13 Carmelite Rd Michael Connolly, 38, family of 7, 5 rooms, Motor mechanic from Heywood Lancs, wife from Mayo: *Boarders* - Thomas Handley, 39, Motor car tester from Limerick, John Graves, 22, Labourer Courtaulds from Westport.
English Households:
15 Carmelite Rd Charles Webb, 46, family of 4, 5 rooms, Tin smith in motor trade: *Boarder* - John Ward, 24, painter of motorbodies born Curragh Camp, Ireland.
40 Binley Rd William Gray, 56, family of 4, six rooms, Painter: *Boarder* - Thomas Quinlan, 19, Apprentice with motor manufacturer, from Kilkenny. Two other boarders.
(See Figure A.20.1 for representation of 13 and 15 Carmelite Road.)

[42] Excluding occupants of Barracks and Workhouse, and those under 15 years. These exclusions also apply to female results furnished later.

Table A.20.4 Number of male Irish-born in notable occupational groupings as per 1911 Census		
000-050	Schoolmaster, Clerical	21
140-190	Foundry labourer, Blacksmith	8
200	Fitting, Turning in ordnance works & motor works	9
210-260	Carpenter, Painter, Gas worker, Bricklayers labourer	9
320-330	Grocers assistant, General labourer	14
421-433	Clergy C of E Physician Veterinary surgeon	1 2 1
515-518	Railway	3
557-564	Coal merchant, Coal labourer, Gardener, Rose grower, Florist	7
621	Millwright cycle works	2
625-629	Machining, Grinding, Drilling laboring in gun works, Engineer	22
644	Tool maker, Tool fitter, Tool grinder	5
694	Cycle trade	21
695	Motor industry	40
696-697	Motor body building	16
834-881	Silk manufacture	52
906-951	Provision Dealer, Baker, Licensed victualler, Waiter, Gasworker	12
		245

Table A.20.4 displays the occupations of 82.5% of occupied Irish-born males collated into notable occupational groupings. Drawing together codings 694-697 the significant volume of Irish-born in the motor industry and cycle industry (77) is apparent. Though there was some crossover work between industries and some incorrect coding of occupations, work in the motor industry was much more prominent than the cycle trade. With codes 834-881 silk manufacture was an important source of employment (52). Irish were found in 625-629 machining, grinding, drilling, and as engineers and labourers in the gun industry (22). There were also e.g. fitters, turners and millwrights in the gun and motor industries, blacksmiths, and iron foundry workers that were variously coded. A further code that may be mentioned was 050 which encompassed 19 Irish-born clerical workers.

There were 234 Irish-born females age 15 & >, but only 67 responded with a coded occupation; the rest were home minders. The coded occupations involved 14 servants, 7 nurses, 7 clerical workers, 7 dressmakers, sewing machinists or milliners, 5 with private means, 3 teachers, 3 weavers, 3 waitresses and 3 charwomen or laundresses. Their involvement in Coventry industry was slight. Only 2 were engaged in cycle production while just another 2 were engineer's examiners in the motor trade.

Mayo with 24, and Dublin with 21, retained their predominance when birthplace of the 130 Irish-born boarders was ascertained. Other noticeable originations were from: Antrim 10, Cork 10, Down 6, Roscommon 6, 'Ireland' 6, Kildare 4, and Sligo 4. A listing of those counties with e.g. 2, shows what diverse areas of Ireland Coventry boarders emerged from: Armagh, Donegal, Limerick, Meath, Tyrone, Waterford and Wicklow.

Within the criterion of this study, an enumeration area-by-area analysis for 1911 which might show how closely Irish-born residence pattern related to the social significance of different areas is not feasible. What can be said from Map A.20.2 and Table A.20.1 is that from its city-wide spread, for most Irish-born, decision on residential location, was prompted by availability of accommodation at reasonable rent

in vicinity of employment, rather than a pressing perceived need to residentially cluster in the face of host dislike.[43] It is contended that those households where an Irishcom headed the household would be most likely to follow the residential trends of those similarly socio-economically situated in the host population. Apart from a noticeable 23 Irish-born in each of Areas 74 and 31 that covered old core areas of yesteryear, there was an even spread of Irish across the city. There was a sprinkling of cycle works and manufacturies in the streets around the central district, e.g. to the east: Canterbury St., Alma St., Lower Ford St., Paynes Lane, and Priory St., that caused workers to reside in their vicinity. Residential development of the city to the north, together with the opening of Courtaulds and the Ordnance works inducing some settlement in that direction. The varying provenance and residential arrangements of the Irish-born in Area 34, which was the district with the highest number of Irish-born residents is shown in Table A.20.5. This was a 'north' city working class area and the nearby Courtaulds 'old' works was obviously a source of employment.[44]

Table A.20.5 Census Details on 26 Irish-born in 1911, resident in Map A.20.1 Enumeration Area 34 called 'Matlock Road' **English Household Head in red**

Address	Head	H	Con Age	Occupation	Birthplace	Irish-born in Household
76 Matlock Road	Mary Kell	10	W 53	Blank	Limerick	3 Mayo-b sons in artificial silk,* 1 Mayo-b dau cashier in tailoring est, 1 Mayo-b visitor machinist blouse fact, 1 Mayo-b visitor a soldier
56 Matlock Road	Ernest Blake	8	M 34	Warehouseman		3 Roscommon-b boarders in artificial silk
50 Matlock Road	Patrick Cribbin	6	M 40	Lift Man Silk Manu	Ireland	Wife from Ledbury, young children b in Morecambe, Bradford, Coventry. 1 I-b boarder unemp labourer
48 Matlock Road	David Samuel Williams	7	M 31	Carpenter		1 Mayo-b boarder artificial silk spinner
151 Foleshill Road	George Tyrell Thorn	11	M 37	Engine Driver, Ord works		1 Co Dublin-b boarder engineers fitter motor works
165 Foleshill Road	William Maculay	6	M 43	Rate Fixer (Foundry) motor ind	Whiteinch, Lanarkshire	Wife from Craigure, Co Derry, 3 Belfast-b children. 1 b in Barrow-in-Furness
175 Foleshill Road	Jane Harley	11	W 66	Blank		3 Mayo-b boarders silk spinners
3 Bishopsgate Inn, Folehill Road	Ann Brennan	2	S 65	Blank	Kiltimagh Mayo	1 Coventry-b daughter
10 Bishopsgate Green	Quinney John	4	M 69	Labourer Coventry Corp	Lisgraba, Roscommon	Wife from Mayo
21 Bishopsgate Green	Charles Harvey	2	M 54	Steam Roller Driver Coventry Corp	Shrewsbury	Wife from Killarney

Source: RG14/18543.41-246 ED 5 *See footnote [45] H=Household size

[43] Allowance must be made for the substantial number of 'accidental' Irish-born that the figures contain.
[44] It strikes too from old photographs that therein some work was taxing e.g. bleaching, and might have attracted Irish workers who were more prepared to do unpopular work.
[45] Mary Kell's husband William died in 1893. The family came to Coventry from Mayo after the 1901 census. William (1878-1951) was the eldest son. The *Telegraph* 18th May 1907 told how his fellow workmates in Courtaulds presented him with a gold watch as a token of admiration and esteem for his bravery at Gallopolli for which he had been awarded the D.S.M. The following report appeared in the *Telegraph* 7th June 1917: 'Mr W. Kell of the R.N.R., a Coventry Irishman who won the D.S.M. at Gallipoli for gallant conduct in action has been the recipient of a presentation from…the Coventry

The Table contains an asterisk which refers to William Kell. The acknowledgement of his bravery outlined in the footnote, provides a fitting ending to this Appendix in that it highlights the many faceted identity scenarios, complimentary and conflicting, that an Irish-born migrant could be a part of in this period. He was an original member of the United Irish League Club thus it can be assumed he favoured the struggle for Irish self-determination.[46] Yet he was a brave serviceman who from early notice served king and country in its struggle. The best appellation that seemed to apply, was neither Irishman or Coventry man, but the name given to him in the *Coventry Telegraph* which was 'Coventry Irishman'.[47]

society. Mr Kell had been one of the original members of the United Irish League and was well known in local Irish circles… He answered the nation's call at the outset of the struggle… Mr. Dan O'Brien making the presentation …understood the honour was a rare and highly coveted one in the ranks of the navy. At a concert which followed 'Father O'Flynn' and the 'Wearing o' the Green' was sung by Mr. Prendergast.'[no connection to writer].

[46] The lyrics to the 'Wearing o'the green' sung at the reception are undiplomatic and bitter.

[47] Finally, it should be recognized that only the statistical position of Irish-born has been referred to in this Appendix. However, they were but 46% (623) of the 1,353 Irishcom identified in 1911.

Chapter 1 Tables

Table 1.1
The 'Top Twenty' Irish towns in Britain in 1851

Number of Irish-born		*% of population Irish-born*	
Town	**Number**	**Town**	**%**
London	108,548	Liverpool	22.3
Liverpool	83,813	Dundee	18.9
Glasgow	59,801	Glasgow	18.2
Manchester*	52,504	Manchester*	13.1
Dundee	14,889	Paisley	12.7
Edinburgh^	12,514	Kilmarnock	12.1
Birmingham	9,341	Newport	10.7
Bradford	9,279	Stockport	10.6
Leeds	8,466	Bradford	8.9
Newcastle	7,124	Gateshead	8.6
Stockport	5,701	Newcastle	8.1
Preston	5,122	Carlisle	8.0
Bristol	4,761	Dumfries	7.4
Sheffield	4,477	Preston	7.4
Bolton	4,453	Chester	7.3
Paisley	4,036	Bolton	7.3
Sunderland	3,601	Wolverhampton	7.0
Wolverhampton	3,491	Edinburgh^	6.5
Merthyr Tydfil	3,051	Halifax	6.2
Hull	2,983	Macclesfield	6.0
Coventry	***698***	***Coventry***	***1.8***

*Manchester and Salford
^Edinburgh and Leith
Source: Census of Great Britain 1851. From: Pooley, Segregation or integration? p. 66

Table 1.2
Coventry: City and Irish-born population in Census Printed Tables and Study Area 1841-1911

Year	PRINTED TABLES			STUDY AREA					
	City Population	Irish-born	% Irish-born	Population	Irish-born	% Irish-born	Irish-born in Barracks	% Barrack Irish-born of all Irish-born	Irish com
1841	30,743	555	1.8	31,032[1]	566	1.8	118	20.9	1040
1851	36,812	698	1.9	36,809	892	2.4	83	9.3	1545
1861	41,647	704	1.7	41,647	795	1.9	72	9.0	1566
1871	37,670[3]	486	1.3	40,113[4]	496[4]	1.2	16	3.2	1162
1881	42,111[5]	(358)[6]	(0.9)	45,130[7]	368	0.8	15	4.1	848
1891	52,724[8]	346	0.7	52,876	347	0.7	33	9.5	711
1901	69,978[9]	416	0.6	70,296[9]	417	0.6	11	2.6	862
1911	106,349[10]	620	0.6	106,931[10]	623	0.6	8	1.3	1353

1. Poor Law Union Area = Study Area
2. The decline between 1861 an 1871 was partly due to Enumeration Area adjustment that excluded 4 Enumeration Districts.
3. 1871 Irish-born in Study Area population of 37,678 was 487.
4. ED 393 = Study Area i.e. includes 4 Enumeration Districts mentioned as excluded in Note 2.
5. City population arrived at during this research is 42,111 + 3005 (Excluded 4 EDs) = 45,116
6. The writer's calculation since Irish-born figures were not supplied in 1881 for Urban Sanitary Districts with <50,000.
7. Includes 4 Enumeration Districts population 2,996 mentioned as excluded in Note 2.
8. Boundary extension in 1890 brought the 4 excluded Enumeration Districts into the Municipal total.
9. City = Coventry C.B. Study Area population = Coventry C.B. and Rural District 292. Boundary adjustment in 1900 that included Stoke and part of Foleshill enlarged the size of the Study area
10. City = Coventry C.B. Study Area population = Coventry C.B. and Rural Districts: St. Michael Without and Holy Trinity Without.

Source: Census of England and Wales 1841-1911

Chapter 2 Tables

Table 2.1
Type of Looms 1838

Wards	Plain Engine	Jacquard Engine	Single Hand	Power	Alabar	Total of Looms
Bayley Lane	24	3	1			28
Bishop's Street	520	325	14	45	6	910
Broadgate	156	13	6			175
Cross Cheaping	138	27	4	8		177
Earl Street	138	52	5			195
Gosford Street	548	213	12			773
Jordan Well	622	226	15			863
Much Park St	44	377	272	20		669
Smithford Street	31					31
Spon Street	763	129	20			912
Total	2,217	1,260	97	53	6	4,733

Report on Hand-Loom Weavers, p. 13

Table 2.2
Number of Looms and Employees in Six Principal Coventry Firms in 1857

Firm	Number of Looms	Number of Employees
James Hart	220	600
Ratcliff's	124	300
Hamerton's	120	300
Spencer & Horsfall	119	300
Cash's	91	256
Iliffe, Peters & Company	70	260

Searby, Weavers and freemen, p. 40

Table 2.3
Steam factories approved for construction 1852-1857

Year	Description
1852	Factory in Earl Street, Factory in West Orchard
1853	Shops and Manufactory in Earl Street
1855	Factory in West Orchard,
1856	Manufactory in Much Park Street, Factory in Lancastrian Yard, Addition to factory in King Street
1857	Factory in Hill Street, Factory in White Friars Lane, Factory and dwelling house in Cox Street, Factory in Gosford, Factory in Much Park Street.

Prest, *Industrial Revolution in Coventry*, p. 94

Table 3.2
A classic stereotype: Movement and settlement of Peter Burke and family, 66 Greyfriars Lane shown in Census 1851

Name	Rel to Head	Mar Con	Age M	Age F	Occupation	Birthplace
Peter Burke[1]	Head	M	36		Labourer	Mayo
Bridget Burke[2]	Wife	M		37		Mayo
John Burke[3]	Son		10		Scholar	Coventry
Dominic Burke[4]	Son		8		Scholar	Mayo
Michael Burke[5]	Son		2		At home	Coventry
Jas Burke[6]	Son		1m		At home	Coventry

The Burke family at mid-century examples the classic stereotype migrant model i.e. headed by an unskilled labourer who had been in trouble with the law for being drunk and disorderly. His appearance before the court in September 1845 for assaulting John Laton is detailed in Chapter 3 Section.5. In the *Coventry Herald* 16th August 1850 **Peter** Burke (1) was fined 5s. and 4s.6d costs for being drunk and disorderly in Greyfriars Lane, and in default of payment, was ordered to be placed in the stocks six hours. In the *Coventry Standard* on 16th August 1850 it was said 'the Irishman who was last week forgiven on promising never to get drunk again, was brought up charged with a like offence'. He was again charged with being drunk and disorderly according to the *Coventry Herald* 21st January. On 22nd July and 19th August 1853 he was also summoned by Vice for taking lodgers without having his house registered. (Appendix 4 describes the overcrowded state of the house). The *Coventry Times* 1st August 1855 reported that he was again fined 5s. and costs and in default to be placed in the stocks following being charged by PC Lee for being drunk and disorderly in Greyfriars Lane. Lee stated there were 30 or 40 persons, chiefly Irish, throwing stones and creating a great disturbance; that he had apprehended Burke with two stones in his hand and that one man had his head cut open. On 19th September 1855 the *Coventry Times* reported PC Deeming told a court that despite the Burkes' house not being registered he found thereon 8 male lodgers, 3 of whom slept in the same room where the family slept.

Table 3.2 Continued
A classic stereotype: Movement and settlement of PeterBurke and family, 66 Greyfriars Lane, shown in Census 1851

On 4th Jun 1858 **Bridget** (2) had become a youthful widow at 42 years with Peter's labouring and drinking having taken its toll. She was in 1861 rearing 7 children ranging in age from 20 years to 2 years. She was now a dealer in clothes and her three eldest children, who were those that were then working: John 20 years, a watch finisher; Dominic 17 years a watch dial painter; and Michael 12 years also a watch finisher. There is to be noticed an early immersion into Coventry society as indicated by the occupations chosen and Coventrian-born marriage partners. In 1871 **John** (3) had married a Coventry dressmaker and by 1881 was father to 3 children. In 1891 John was a widower, watch finisher and his son a cycle machinist. In 1901 he was visiting William and Georgena Issard in 48 Cox Street. Though John had displayed an assimilatory demeanour, staying all his life in the centre of the city, and working as a watch finisher, he must have had some resonance with his parents' origin as Georgena Issard was from Dublin, and lodging in a neighbouring household was Harry Irons a cycle plater from Cork. There is the strong possibility that his wife Mary A. was the daughter of Mary Tomms a silk weaver's widow who was stated in 1861 as born in Kilkenny (See Table 3.23). **Dominick** (4) and family show a similar occupational transition; in 1881 he was a paper box maker and married to London born Celia. In 1891 Dominick was a cycle machinist–brazier, and in 1901 their 19 year old son Edward was a motor car driver. **Michael** (5) in 1871 had married a silk weaver from Foleshill and lived in 15 Drapers Field. He was a watchmaker finisher in 1891. Now head of a family of nine, all Coventry born, that featured his 19 year old son a house painter and two daughters who were silk weavers. **James** (6) died aged 50, in 1901 in North Melbourne, Australia.

Bridget married Irish-born labourer Patrick Caulfield in 1862, They were recorded together in Greyfriars Lane in 1871. Bridget was living in Greyfriars Lane in the absence of Patrick in 1881. There is an entry in the Death Index for a Bridget Caulfield in January 1887.

In 1861 there is mention of further children: Thomas 7 years, Peter 4 years and Mary 2 years.

HO107/2067.326.21 ED 16; RG10/3176.53.20 ED 15; RG11/3071.65.25 ED4; RG12/2452.46.27 ED 2; RG13/2906.22.13 ED 2; RG11/3073.5.2 ED15; RG12/2455.38.17 ED 18; RG13/2913.23.38 ED 29; RG10/3179.97.4 ED 6; RG12/2450.7A.9 ED 17; Australia, Death Index 1787-1985: 1901.Victoria,10670; E & W, Marriage Index 1862, Warwickshire, Vol. 6d p. 621; RG10/3176.10.14 ED 12; RG11.3067.40.12 ED 12; E & W, Death Index, 1887, January; RG9/2202.107.15.

Table 3.3
The Malone Family transition over three generations: Mayo via Stourbridge to Coventry, with particular reference to the situation of Martin & his family

Sch/ Street	Name	Rel Hd	C	A M	A F	Occupation	Birthplace
1851: 94 George Walk Stourbridge	John Malone	Head	M	40		Ag Labourer	Ireland
	Mary Malone	Wife	M		30		Ireland
	Bridget Malone	Dau			8		Ireland
	Martin Malone	Son		5			Ireland
	Judy Malone	Dau			9_m		Stourbridge
1871: 164 Hemplands, Stourbridge	John Malone[1]	Head	M	60		Marine Dealer	Ireland
	Mary Malone[2]	Wife	M		52		Ireland
	Martin Malone[3]	Son		25		Marine Dealer	Ireland
1881: H8C1 Hale St., Coventry	Martin Malone	Head	M	34		Bricklayers Labourer	Ireland
	Charlotte Malone	Wife	M		32		Cradley Heath
	James Malone[4]			10			Cradley Heath
	Martin Malone[5]			1_M			Coventry
1891: 16 Agnes Lane, Coventry[7]	Martin Malone[6]	Head	M	42		Marine Store Dealer	Ireland
	Charlotte Malone[8]	Wife	M		41		Cradley Heath
	James Malone	Son		20			Cradley Heath
	Mary Malone	Dau			8		Coventry
	Ellen Malone	Dau			6		Coventry
	Annie Malone	Dau			3		Coventry
1901: 102 Godiva St., Coventry	James Malone	Head	M	30		Cycle Finisher	Cradley Heath
	Jane Malone	Wife	M		28		Wolston, Wws
	Alice M Malone	Dau			5		Coventry
	Martin J Malone	Son		3			Coventry
	Stella M Malone	Dau			1		Coventry
	Mary Malone	Sister			18	Watch Plate Turning	Coventry
	Ellen Malone	Sister			16	Dressmaking	Coventry
	Annie Malone	Sister			13		Coventry
1911: 22 Lower Ford St., Coventry	James Malone[9]	Head	M	40		Cycle Finisher	Rowley Regis
	Jane Malone	Wife	M		38		Wolston, Wws
	Alice M Malone	Dau	M		15	Sh'hand Typt Learner	Coventry
81 Gulson Road, Coventry	Mary Goode[10]	Head			28		Coventry
	Ellen Malone	Sister			26	Shorthand Typist	Coventry
	Annie Malone	Sister			23	Book-Keeper	Coventry

Table 3.3 Continued

The Malone Family transition over three generations: Mayo via Stourbridge to Coventry, with particular reference to the situation of Martin & his family.

1. John Malone shared the dwelling with 4 other households. Also 8 persons in that house described as Ag labourers in 1851. John died in 1873 at 62 years.
2. Mary was recorded at H4C8 Birmingham St, Stourbridge in 1881 as a 50 year widow, and a Hawker of Oranges. Crucially, she also mentioned Mayo as her birthplace. This was the only occasion when any member of this family mentioned an Irish county of origin. She died in 1887 at 63 years.
3. Martin and Charlotte married in Spring 1874. There is a six-year hiatus until 1881 before a child is born. This seems unusual given the regular arrival of new-borns thereafter.
4. It is suggested that James was Charlotte's son born in late 1872. It appears he was born to her after the census of 1871 and prior to her marriage to Martin in 1874 where he may have had a change of name to Malone.
5. Martin died April 1892.
6. Died April 1881.
7. A description of 16 Agnes Lane is provided below.
8. Charlotte died 23 Dec 1899 aged 49 y.
9. Also Martin 13y, Denis 9y, James 6y & Gwendoline 1y. James died in 1916 at 45 years.
10. Also her daughter Marjorie Helen Goode, 1y.

This Table shows how a sequential page by page inspection of enumeration pages of city censuses can miss an underlying substantive actuality. In this process, where born in Ireland or having an association to someone born in Ireland, marks out those who are Irishcom, Martin and his family would only present for inclusion for 1881 and 1891. His thirty years residence in Britain, prior to arrival in Coventry would not draw attention to itself and would go unmarked as would the presence of his children and grand-children in 1901 and thereafter. The relatively early deaths of his parents and the generational transition in occupational preference from his father's agricultural labouring to his own children and grand-daughter's occupations within the clerical and industrial domain of Coventry would remain unperceived. Martin and his son were married to English women from the countryside: Charlotte's father was a butcher, while Jane's father was an agricultural labourer and she was a servant to a farmer.

Through paradoxically unfortunate circumstances, it is fortunate that an occurrence reported in *Coventry Herald* in 1890 provided some words from Charlotte and some rare insight into her child rearing skills (See below). Martin died in 1892 and had left a young family for Charlotte to rear. She also died young and the composition of the household in 1901 and 1911shows the existence of a strong supportive family bond following her death, with the siblings residing together.

The relatively young ages when some family members died is to be noted HO107/2035.67.31 ED 1c; RG10/3023.53.35 ED10; RG11/3071.122.18 ED 7; RG11/2886.50.22 ED3; RG12/2452.101.22 ED 4; RG13/2912.87.19 ED19; RG14/18564 ED26; RG14/18564 ED 26

Death of Martin and Charlotte Malone's daughter

Coventry Herald 26th September 1890 reported that Dr C.W. Iliffe, Coroner held an inquest on the death of eight month Charlotte Malone, 16, St. Agnes Lane. Mrs Malone said the child had ailed since birth and had bronchitis two months ago. She was taken ill on Monday and had been given castor oil which brought relief. On Tuesday she gave the child a teaspoonful of brandy in four teaspoonful of water. The coroner on asking was told by her that she had 'always given the child brandy, a little drop from her birth'. The coroner remarked that 'She must have been desperately low. That you should commence to give the child brandy from birth seems to me an extraordinary thing. It is a practice that should not be followed'. It was then revealed that the child had been insured a month after it was born. The coroner thought this was remarkable and had noticed from the large number of inquests he attended that in some cases infantile death occurred shortly after the child was entitled to benefits. He did not wish to say the mother had done anything wrong, but would say infant assurance was not conducive to life. A failure to call the doctor was not necessarily due to crushing poverty as the description of their residence indicates some comfort and probate papers after her death in 1899 show she had effects of £796 3s. 10d. There was no reference made in the report on the coroner's inquest, to Martin's Irish background.

Description of 16 St. Agnes Lane where the Martin Malone and family lived in 1891

An advertisement *Coventry Herald* 11th September 1891: 'Five Freehold Messuages, Nos. 13 to 17 inclusive, let to Messrs. Gough, Harrow, Watts, Malone, and Roberts, at weekly rentals amounting to £46 16s. 0d. per annum. Each House contains kitchen, scullery, pantry, coalhole, two chambers, and large weaver's shop excepting No. 16, which has three chambers, and No 13, which has a small parlour extending under the adjoining property of Miss Judd. There is a small lean-to outhouse at the back of No. 17, and at the rear of the whole a large open yard with three w.c.'s, ashpit, and town water tap thereon, and entry or passage leading thereto from the street for joint use of the tenants. The Property is situate in a good neighbourhood for letting, and presents a desirable small investment.'

Table 3.4
The influence of a spouse on settlement decision.
Thomas Black and Family, Albion Street 1851

Name	Relation to Head	Con	A M	A F	Occupation	Birthplace
Thomas Black	Head	M	48		Chelsea pensioner	Ireland
Susan Black	Wife	M		33	Silk winder	Warwick
John Black	Son	U	18		Apprentice	East Indies
Thomas Black	Son	U	15		Apprentice	East Indies
Martha Black	Daughter			14	Silk winder	East Indies
Sarah Black	Daughter			9	Scholar	Canterbury
Charles Black	Son		7		Scholar	Hampton Ct
Elizabeth Black	Daughter			5	Scholar	Coventry
Harriett Black	Daughter			11m		Coventry

HO107/2067.594.38 ED 29; Warwick Anglican Registers Engl/2/1252/DR 447;RG9/2205.58.15 ED35 In 1861 Thomas was described as London born.

Table 3.5
An Irish-born in an English Household.
William Widlake, Irish-born son, of retired soldier Thomas Widlake, H3C9 Little Park St. 1881

Name	Rel Head	Con	Age M	Age F	Occupation	Birthplace
Thomas Widlake	Head	M	45		Coachman	Bristol, Glos.
Eliza Widlake	Wife	M		36		Coventry
George Widlake	Son		16		Light Porter	Aldershot, Hants
Ellen Widlake	Dau			15	Dom Servant	Brighton, Sussex
William Widlake	*Son*		*11*		*Scholar*	*Caher, Tipperary*
Eliza Widlake	Dau			7	Scholar	Edinburgh,
Albert Widlake	Son		1			Coventry

This household is an example of a household classified as an *English Household containing Irish.*
Thomas and Eliza were married in 1863 (18 years earlier) thus ruling out Thomas having been previously married, or as the 6 year gap between the Edinburgh and Coventry births might suggest. The birthplaces of the children were all garrison towns. Thomas died in July 1888 at 53 years after two further children Selina and Annie were born in Coventry.
In 1911 William was still living locally in H5C36 Much Park Street with his wife and seven children. He worked as a fitter and turner for Swift Motor Car Co and wrote 'Clare', Ireland rather than Caher, indicating he had little knowledge of the exact location of his birthplace.
RG11/3067.13.18 ED10; RG12/2450.58.23 ED 20; RG14/18517 ED 7

Table 3.6
Chelsea Pensioners 1851 with Irish Connection

Name & Age	Occupation	B'Place	Wife & Age	Occupation	B'place	T
James Bresnan 50	Ch Pen	Ireland	Mary 35	Wife	Ireland	1
Benjamin Kimberley 66	H l weaver Ch Pen	Coventry	Nance 66	----	Dublin	29
Thomas Bird 56	Shoemaker, Ch Pen	Ireland	Susanna h 69	H l Weaver	Coventry	17
James Hare 44	Labourer Ch Pen	Wexford	Celia 33	Wife	Roscommon	8
Andrew Connor 58	Pensioner gardener	Ireland	Ann 40	----	Ireland	17
James McClean 79	Pen Ch	Belfast	Ann 59	Silk winder	Coventry	15
James Roe 53	Ch Pen	Dublin	Elizabeth 50	Silk winder	Coventry	?
Thomas Black 48	Ch Pen	Ireland	Susan 33	Silk winder	Warwick	5
Patrick McMahon 72	Ch Out Pen	Ireland	Elizabeth 60	Silk winder	Foleshill	?

T = Known number of years residing in Coventry from age of first listed child.
If children were step-children the length of time at T may be incorrect.
Thomas Black household outlined in earlier Table 3.4.
T = 17 for Andrew Connor. He then lived in nearby Bedworth which is here regarded as Coventry.
Census 1851 - ADB

Table 3.7
Selected Warwickshire Registration Districts 1851 showing Irish-born as percentage of population

	Nuneaton	Foleshill	Rugby	Warwick	Stratford
Total Population	13,532	19,490	23,477	41,934	20,789
Irish-Born	73	70	261	806	117
Irish-Born % of Population	.54	.04	1.11	1.92	.56

Registrations Districts stretched wider than the towns of similar name (e.g. Warwick included Kenilworth and Leamington).
Census of Great Britain1851, PP 1852-53 LXXXVIII Pt.II.1 [1691-II] pp. 525

Table 3.8
The Strength of the Galegin and the Burn Households in Much Park Street, 1851

Sch No	Name	Rel to Head	Con	Age M	Age F	Occupation	Birthplace
52	Patrick Burn	Head	M	40		Labourer	Castlebar
	Mary Burn[1]	Wife	M		42		Swinefort
	Bridget Burn	Dau	U		14		Coventry
	Martha Burn	Dau			2		Coventry
	Mary Burn	Dau			6m		Coventry
	Martin Odin	Lodger	M	30		Labourer	Roscommon
	Margaret Odin	Wife	M		20		Roscommon
	Martin Burn	Lodger	M	30		Labourer	Dublin
	Bridget Burn	Lodger	M		40		Castlebar
	Catherine Burn	Dau	U		15		Swinefort
57	James Galegin	Head	M	20		Labourer	Mayo[2]
	Hannah Galegin[3]	Wife	M		30		Mayo
	Mary Kelley	Lodger	W		40		Mayo
	Thomas Kelley	Lodger	U	15		Labourer	Mayo
	Richard Galegin	Lodger	M	42		Labourer	Mayo
	Mary Galegin	Lodger	M		38		Mayo
	James Galegin	Lodger	U	29		Labourer	Mayo
	Martin Galegin	Lodger	U	20		Labourer	Mayo
	Bridget Galegin	Lodger	U		20	Labourer	Mayo
	Mary Galegin	Lodger	U		20		Mayo
	Mark Galegin	Lodger	U	18		Labourer	Mayo
	Thomas Galegin	Lodger	U	13			Mayo
	Richard Galegin	Lodger	U	18			Mayo
	Michael Galegin	Lodger	U	10			Ireland

1. It seems likely that Mary Burn was a Galegin and the rest of the Galegins followed her to Coventry.
2. An indistinct placename accompanied the word Ireland which has been interpreted as Cultrasna (continued as 'do' for other family members) near Kiltamagh in Co Mayo. Here prior to the Great Famine houses were arranged in 'clumps' or 'clusters'. This penchant for close living may offer a reason why the Galegins/Galligans from this area were found in 1861 in C22 Much Park Street and in the Caldicott Yard cluster in West Orchard.
3. It seems likely that Hannah Galegin may have been Hannah Grogan mentioned in Appendix 4 19th April 1850. Hannah Grogan's brother Owen was married to Mary Geoghegan (Table 4.1). This all indicates the close relationship between the Grogan and Gahagan families.

HO107/2067.249-250.16-18 ED12 Mary and Thomas Kelley were also found in 1841, HO107/1153 Book 2.15.23 ED 3

Table 3.9
Apparent Chain Migration as shown by four Households in 1851 Census

Sch/Street	Name	Rel to Head	Con	AM	AF	Occupation	Birthplace
83 Cow Lane	Thomas Cronan	Head	M	36		Irish Labourer	Galway
	Bridget F Cronan	Wife	M		32	Washerwoman	Galway
	Rose Cronan	Dau			14	Servant	Galway
	John Cronan	Son		12		Engine turner	Galway
	Michael Cronan	Son		10		Engine turner	Galway
	Sarah Flinn	Visitor	U		22	Washerwoman	Galway
	Mary Cronan	Visitor	U		24	Washerwoman	Galway
118 Warwick Lane	John Ryan	Head	M	24		Labourer	Crigs, Galway Co
	Catherine Kelly	--------	M		20	Dressmaker	Knockmane I
	Martin Kelly	B in Law	M	23		Labourer	Crigs, Galway Co
	Bridget Kelly	Sister	U		22	Washerwoman	Knockmane I
	Bridget Ryan	Sister	M		27	Washerwoman	Crigs, Galway Co
3 Gosford Street	James Martin	Head	M	24		Labourer	Roscommon
	Ann Martin	Wife	M		19		Roscommon
	John Canley	Lodger	U	27			Roscommon
	Winney Canley	Sister	U		17	Washerwoman	Roscommon
127 Far Gosford Street	Thomas McLean	Head	M	51		Rib Wv H L Silk	Dublin
	Mary Ann McLean	Wife	M		50	Silk Winder	Dublin
	Mary Ann McLean	Dau	U		23	Rib Wv H L[1]	Coventry
	Jane McLean	Dau	U		19	Rib Wv H L	Coventry
	Thomas McLean	Son	U	17		Rib Wv H L	Coventry
	Eliza McLean	Dau	U		14	Silk Filler	Coventry
	Anna McLean	Dau	U		11	Silk Filler	Coventry
	John Adkins	Nephew	U	18		Rib Wv H L	Dublin
	Jane Bradshaw	Visitor	U		31	Dressmaker	Dublin

1. Unusually both daughters were hand loom weavers
HO107/2067.309.20 ED 15; HO107/2067.345.25 Ed 17; HO107/2067.64.1 ED; HO107/2068.436.30 ED 1v

Table 3.10
Pathways of Silk Workers to Coventry as revealed by the Birthplaces of the Children of the Kinsella, Fleming and McGee Families in the 1851 Census

Sch/Street	Name	Rel to Head	M C	A M	A F	Occupation	Birth place
45 Brewery St	**William Kinsella**	Head	M	45		Ribbon weaver	Ireland[1]
	Catherine Kinsella	Wife	M		43	Quill filler silk	Ireland[2]
	Mary Ann Kinsella	Dau			19	Servant	Congleton
	Margaret Kinsella	Dau			16	Quill filler silk	Congleton
	Sally Kinsella	Dau			8	Scholar	Derby
74 Leicester St	**John Fleming**[3]	Head	M	49		Ribbon Weaver	Dublin
	Elizabeth Fleming[4]	Wife	M		46		Congleton
	Sarah Fleming	Dau			28	Silk winder	Congleton
	Elizabeth Fleming	Dau			17	Silk winder	Congleton
	Letitia Fleming	Dau			15	Silk winder	Congleton
	Harriot Fleming	Dau			12	Silk winder	Congleton
	Jane Fleming	Dau			7	Scholar	Congleton[5]
	Ellen Fleming	Dau			4	Scholar	Derby
15 Thomas St	**Thomas McGee**[6]	Head	M	30		Silk Dyer	Ireland
	M McGee	Wife	M		28	Laundress	Coventry
	M A McGee	Visitor			15	Silk Winder	Ireland
	I McGee	Dau			14	Picker Up	Derby
	I McGee	Son		11		Scholar	Derby
	W McGee	Son		1		At home	Coventry

Comment: William Kinsella may have left Dublin between 1806 and c1832 to reach Coventry in 1849; John Fleming from 1802 and c1824 if Elizabeth was his only wife. However the 11 year gap between his daughters Sarah and Elizabeth make it possible that he left Ireland up to c1834, but arrived in Coventry in the last 5 years. Thomas McGee could have arrived at any time over the last 30 years from Ireland but based on the age gap between his sons may have reached Coventry about 1841.

1 & 2. Dublin stated in 1861

3. In 1861 household had returned to Derby and resided at 22 Full Street, Derby. Martin 6y Scholar Coventry. Also in 1851, 2 nephews born in Congleton. 10 in household

4. In 1881 Elizabeth Fleming now 75y was a widow living in Manchester

5. Stated as born in Derby in 1861.

6. A widower who remarried Martha Wilson 10th March 1849

HO107/2068.179.9 Ed 1i; HO107/2068.128.19 Ed 1f; HO107/2067.601.4 ED 30

Table 3.11
Census 1841: Occupations with the Predominant Silk Industry differentiated

Occupations of Heads and Wives *Irish Households*		**Occupations of Irishcom found in** *English Households containing Irish.*	
Male		**Male**	**Female**
Born in Ireland Weaver/Weaver J/Silk Weaver 55 Ribbon M 1 Warper 1 Silk Throwster 1 --- Labourer 6 Shoemaker/ Cordwainer 5 Agricultural Labourers 4 Silk Dyer/Dyer 4 Broker 4 Tailor 3 Hawker 2 Army 1 Army Private 1 Army Surgeon 1 Baker 1 Barrack Master 1 Boxmaker 1 Builder 1 Carpenter J 1 Coach Maker 1 Coal Dealer 1 Coal Labourer 1 Horse Breaker 1 Independent 1 J (Journeyman) 1 Letter Press Printer 1 Lodging House Keeper 1 Painter 1 Pavior 1 Schoolmaster 1 Smith White 1 Staff sar~~ 1 Stone Mason J 1 Tailor & Draper 1 Trunk Maker 1 Watch M 1 Watchmaker 1 Other 2	**Not-Born in Ireland but Irish association** Plush and Silk Weavers 17 --- Agricultural Labourer 4 Shoemaker 3 Labourer 3 Policeman 2 Army 1 Basket Maker 1 Brewer 1 Engraver 1 Filler 1 Haberdasher 1 Silk Dyer 1 **Female** **Born in Ireland** Weaver 3 Warper 2 Silk Winder/Winder 2 Filler 2 --- Charwoman 1 Independent 1 Laundress 1 Lodging House Keeper 1 Milliner 1 **Household Heads' Wives Born in Ireland** Weaver 14 Winder 9 Filler 2 --- Housekeeper 1 **Household Heads' Wives Not-Born in Ireland** Weaver/Silk Weaver 7 Winder 3 Filler 2 --- Charwoman 1	**Born in Ireland** Weaver/Weaver J 9 --- Tailor /Tailor J 9 Labourer 13 Hawker 6 Army 4 Traveller 4 Agricultural Labourer 3 Winder 3 Clerk/Post Office Clerk 2 Plasterer 2 Shoemaker/Cordwainer 2 Cutler 1 Dyer 1 Independent 1 Other 1 Orange Merchant 1 Painter 1 Pensioner 1 Printer 2 Umbrella Mr 1 **Not-Born in Ireland but Irish association** Weaver 1 --- Army 1 Confectioner 1 Gardner 1	**Born in Ireland** Filler 10 Weaver/Silk Weaver 8 Winder 7 Warper 1 --- Charwoman 1 Dressmaker 1 Nurse 1 **Not-Born in Ireland but Irish association** Weaver 2

Source: ADB

Table 3.12
Diarrhoeal Mortality in selected parts of Coventry 1858.
Dr Greenhow's Selection of Districts varying from a 0.3 per 1,000 diarrhoeal norm

Name of District	**Average annual Number of Deaths per 1,000 persons**
St. John Street	1.5
Union & Thomas Streets	2.0
Swanswell Street, &c.	2.3
Sherbourne St & Spon End	2.7
West Orchard	3.3
Much Park Street	4.0
Gosford Street	4.1
Spon Street	4.2
Well Street	7.3
City:	
Coventry	2.6
Birmingham *Wolverhampton*	*2.3* *2.4*
Greenhow, Second Report 1860 p. 68	

Table 3.13
Population of Palmer Lane 1841-1901

Year	Population	Irish-Born	Irishcom	% Irishcom
1841	239	3	11	4.6
1851	271	35	50	18.4
1861	175	16	27	15.4
1871	144	22	40	27.7
1881	146	23	37	25.3
1891	107	11	21	19.6
1901	47	1	4	8.5
Source: ADB				

Table 3.14
A 'Court Cluster'. Residents, many from Mayo, in Court 4 Palmer Lane 1881

House No	Name	Rel to Head	Con	A M	A F	Occupation	Birth place
4 (14)	Cicely Burke	Head	Wid		80	Lod House Keeper	Ireland
	Catherine Mortimer	Dau	M		45	Laundress	Ireland
	Patrick Mortimer	S-in-L	M	35		Labourer Day	Ireland
	John Burns	Lod	M	25		Hawker	Ireland
	Michael Gill	Lod	M	50		Agricultural Labourer	Ireland
	Michael Gill	Lod		20		Agricultural Labourer	Ireland
	Thomas Hines	Lod		30		Agricultural Labourer	Ireland
	Michael Macnamara	Lod		30		Agricultural Labourer	Ireland
	Thomas Burke	Lod		25		Shoe Maker	Ireland
	Michael Panney	Lod		60		Agricultural Labourer	Ireland
8 (2)	Mary Riley	Head	M		60	Laundress	Ireland
	Annie Burns	G Dau			2		Coventry
9 (2)	Patrick Carroll	Head	M	23		Bricklayers Labourer	Ireland
	Margaret Carroll	Wife	M		23		Ireland
11 (7)	Mary Ryan[1]	Head	Wid		53	Charwoman	Coventry
	Bridget Killin	Lod	M		40	Hawker	Ireland
12 (8)	Richard Gahegan	Head	M	45		Day Labourer	Ireland
	Mary Gahegan	Wife	M		42		Ireland
	Mary Ann Gahegan	Dau			22	Cotton Weaver	Coventry
	Thomas Gahegan	Son		18		Blacksmith	Coventry
	Ellen Gahegan	Dau			16	Silk Weaver	Coventry
	Annie Gahegan	Dau			13	Scholar	Coventry
	Kate Gahegan	Dau			10	Scholar	Coventry
	Bridget E Gahegan	Dau			7	Scholar	Coventry
13 (6)	John Sheridan	Head	Wdr	48		Light Porter	Mayo
	Michael Sheridan	Son		21		Light Porter	Coventry
	Tom Sheridan	Son		20		Watchmaker Finisher	Coventry
	Mary Sheridan	Dau			17	Gen Serv Unemployed	Coventry
	James Sheridan	Son		14		Scholar	Coventry
	Ann Sheridan	Dau			10	Scholar	Coventry

Household Size in parentheses
'1' Inserted only for illustration as was classified a head of an *English Household with Irishcom.* RG11/3072.29-30.16-18 ED 9

Table 3.15
The dominance of Irishcom in Caldicotts Yard, West Orchard 1861

Sch/ Ho	Name	Rel to Head	Mar Con	Age M	Age F	Occupation	Birthplace
47/1	Ann Handley	Head	W		46	Laundress	Ireland
	Thomas Handley	Son		17		Labourer	Ireland
48/1	Daniel Ford	Head	M	27		Labourer	Ireland
Room 2	Mary Ford	Wife	M		24	Silk Manfcturer	Not Stated
	(+ 1 Eng-born < 10y)						
52/4	James Sheriden	Head	M	60		Labourer	Ireland
	Ellen Sheriden	Wife	M		40	Washerwoman	Ireland
53/5	William O Nail	Head	M	35		Matmaker	Ireland
	Mary O Nail	Wife	M		33	Hawker	Ireland
	Margaret O Nail	Dau			10	Scholar	Coventry
	(+ 3 Cov-born < 10y)						
56/9	Patrick Dunahoe	Head	M	40		Labourer	Ireland
	(+ 2 Cov-b < 10y)						
	Marg' Dunahoe	Sis			16	Washwoman	Ireland
57/10	Catherine Ford	Head	W		58	Nurse	Ireland
	John Ford	Son		23		Labourer	Ireland
	James Ford	Son		18		Labourer	Ireland
58/11	John Stanley	Head	M	32		Labourer	Ireland
	Anne Stanley	Wife	M		30	Laundress	Dukerin
	(1 Cov-born < 10y)						
59/13	George Mander	Head	M	26		Cordwainer	England
	Mary Mander	Wife	M		21	Silk Winder	Ireland
60/14	John McIntyre	Head	M	55		Hawker	Ireland
61/17	James Morgan	Head	M	35		Labourer	Ireland
	Bridget Morgan	Wife	M		40		Ireland
	(3 Cov-born < 10y)						
62/	Patrick Moran	Head	M	40		Labourer	Ireland
16C9	Mary Moran	Wife	M		40		Ireland
	Mary Ann Moran	Dau			11		Coventry
	(+ 2 Cov-born < 10y)						
	Ann Gorman	S i L			22		Ireland
	John Gorman	Neph		5m			Coventry

Table 3.15 Continued
The dominance of Irishcom in Caldicotts Yard, West Orchard 1861

64/ 2C9	Charles O Donnell	Head	M	37		Agriculturer	Ireland
	Mary O Donnell	Wife	M		32		Ireland
	(+ 3 Cov-born < 10y)						
	Bridget Gill	S i L			22		Ireland
	Margaret Gill	S i L			19		Ireland
	Thomas Ludden	Neph		21		Agriculturer	Ireland
	John Ludden	Neph		19		Agriculturer	Ireland
65/ 4C9	Catherine Calaghan	Head	W		45	Lod ho' kpr	Ireland
	Mary Calaghan	Dau			20	Weaver/warp	Atherst'n
	Cath' Calaghan	Dau			16	Weaver/warp	Atherst'n
66/ 5C9	Richard Gallagon	Head	M	28		Labourer	Ireland
	Mary Gallagon	Wife	M		26	Washwoman	Ireland
	(+ 2 Cov-born < 10y)						
	Mary Burne	M i L			60	Nurse	Ireland
	Mark Burne	B in L		22		Labourer	Ireland
	Mary Nichols	Board			26	Washwoman	Ireland
	Nelly Nichols	Board			5		Coventry
70/ 10C9	Darby Boyle	Head	M	37		Labourer	Ireland
	Helena Boyle	Wife	M		36		Ireland
	(+ 2 Cov-born < 10y)						
	Martin Boyle	Bro		25		Labourer	Ireland
	Mary Anne O Brien	Lod			30	Charwoman	Ireland
	William O Brien	Lod			6		London
	Mary Anne O Brien	Lod			3		London
72/ 14C9	Mary Byrne	Lod	W		62	Confectioner	Ireland
79/15	James Henery	Head	M	40		Labourer	Ireland
	Bridget Henery	Wife	M		38	Washwoman	Ireland
	Mary Henery	Dau			14	Servant	Staff'sh
	James Henery	Son		11			Warw'sh
	(+ 3 Cov-born & 1Rugby-born< 10y)						

Nos 7, 12, 15, 3C9, 6C9, 11C9, 13C9 uninhabited; 1 Room 3 Stephen Murphy General Dealer Coventry. See Appendix 12; 62/16C9 Also Rose Gorman, Dau in Law, M, 26, Rag collector and her 2 children all born in Britain; 64/2C9 Also 1 male unmarried lodger; 65/4C9 Also 5 lodgers; 72/14C9 Licd Lod House, Head, W, 49, Laundress and 2 daughters.

On 2nd March 1860 the *Coventry Standard* recorded that Mary Stanley who lived with her son and wife in Caldicott's Yard, and who was 66 years, died 'somewhat suddenly'. The report said: 'She was worse than usual during Monday night, but unfortunately her relatives did not think it necessary to get medical assistance.'

It is to be noted as shown by the birthplace of Catherine Callaghan's child Mary that Irish such as Catherine could have arrived pre-Famine.

RG09/2206.23-25.11-16 ED 2

Table 3.16
Irishcom in Gosford Street shown in Figure 3.4 and Map 3.5 in 1861

House	Name	Rel Head	C	A M	A F	Occupation	Birth place
H1C20	Thomas Bird	Head	M	30		Cordwainer	Ireland[1]
	Mary Bird	Wife	M		29		Ireland
	Jane Bird	Dau			3		Ireland
H5C22	Thomas Manning	Head	M	77		Silk wv & Pension	Coventry
	Catherine Manning	Wife	M		70	Silk Weaver	Kilkenny
H4C23	James Mouran [2]	Lodger		45		Cordwainer	Sligo
167	Caroline Eaton	Head	W		46	Coach lace weaver	Dublin
	Margaret Eaton	Dau			23	Coach lace weaver	Dublin
	Elizabeth Eaton	Dau			21	Coach lace weaver	Dublin
	Caroline Eaton	Dau			19	Trimming maker	Dublin
	Anna B Eaton	Dau			8		Dublin
169	William Cleaver	Head	M	55		Silk weaver	Coventry
	Lydia Cleaver	Wife	M		55	Silk weaver	Dublin
	John Cleaver	Son		26		Silk weaver	Coventry
	James Cleaver	Son		14		Loom mounter	Coventry
	William Cleaver	Gr S		10		Scholar	Coventry
H10C26	Mary Tomms	Head	W		60	Silk weaver	Kilkenny
	Mary A Tomms	Dau			23	Silk picker up	Coventry
	Sarah Tomms	Dau			21	Silk picker up	Coventry
	Elizabeth Tomms	Dau			15	Silk winder	Coventry
	Ellen Tomms	Dau			3		Coventry
	James Tomms	Gr S		3			Coventry
H4C29	David Spiller[3]	Head	M	26		Tailor	Cork Co
	Ellen Spiller	Wife	M		27		Cork Co
	William Spiller	Son		13		Loom turner	Cork Co
	Catherine Spiller	Dau			4		Coventry
	Timothy Spiller	Son		2			Coventry
	David Spiller	Son		2_m			Coventry
81	Maria Tisdale[4]	Lodger	W		53	Shoe binder	Dublin

1. Thomas Bird appears Irish born in 1851 but as Coventry-born to an Irish-born father in 1841.
2. Only lodger whose household head was a 44y married charwoman.
3. The Spiller family were not subsequently recorded in coventry
4. Head 66y married confectioner, wife, dau, son. 1 other lodger
RG9/2201.59.27 ED 4 et sequens

Table 3.17
Irishcom Residents 1861-1871: Court 17 Much Park Street as shown in Figure 3.5 and Map 3.6

House	Name	Rel to Head	Mar Con	AM	AF	Occupation	Birthplace
1861							
H1C17	Elizabeth Connor	Head	M		30	Charwoman	Roscommon
	Sarah Ann Connor	Dau			5	Scholar	Bromwitch
	Elizabeth Connor	Dau			2		Coventry
	Sarah Miley	Visitor			40	Charwoman	Galway
	Ralph Miley	Son		7		Scholar	Coventry
H2C17	John Sherriden	Head	M	24		Porter	Mayo
	Bridget Sherriden	Wife	M		24		Mayo
	Mary Sherriden	Unstated	W		74		Mayo
	Michael Sherriden	Son		1			Coventry
	Thomas Sherriden	Son		1m			Coventry
1871							
H4C17	John E. Simkins	Head	M	45		Jman Watch maker	Coventry
	Catherine Simkins	Wife	M		45		Cork City
	William J Simkins	Son		10		Scholar	Croydon Surrey
	Mary E Simkins	Dau			1		Holloway London

In 1861: H3 was occupied by James Raby, 41y, Silk weaver, b. Cov, his wife and 5 children.
H4 was occupied by widowed Sarah Pollard, 48y, Silk weaver, b. Cov, and her son.
H5 was occupied by John Pritchard, 34y, Chimney sweep, b. Cov, his wife, dau, his brother and a servant both chimney sweeps.
In 1871: H1, H2 and H5 were vacant, A labourer Alfred Hawkiford and family lived at H3.
There were no Irish in the Court in 1881 or 1891
The Sheridens moved to Palmer Lane by 1881 (Table 3.18)
RG9/2202.19.3,4 ED10; RG10/3175.73.10 ED6

Table 3.18
Irishcom Residents 1861: Court 13 St. Johns Street as shown in Figures 3.6/3.6A and Map 3.6

Sch/Ho	Name	Rel to Head	Con	A M	A F	Occupation	Birthplace
55/2	Francis Flynn[1]	Lod	M	66		Hawker	Ireland
	Jane Flinn	Lod	M		42	Hawker	Dublin
	Francis Flinn	Lod	U	14		Hawker	Ireland
	P~~ Flinn	Lod	U		11	Hawker	Ireland
50/5	Teresia Smith	Head	W		60	Charwoman	Dublin
42 /12	Joseph Burnell[2]	Head	M	30		Weaver silk	Coventry
	Mary A Burnell	Wife	M		24		Dublin
	L~~ James Burnell	Son	U	8		Scholar	Coventry
	Joseph Burnell	Son	U	6		Scholar	Coventry
	Thomas John Burnell	Son	U	2			Coventry
	John Burnell	Son	U	8_m			Coventry
22/29	Thomas Hiligall[3]	Head	M	24		Labourer	Ireland
	Elen Hiligall	Wife	M		20	Laundress	Ireland

1. Licensed lodging house. Thirteen in Household. Head widow, 72y, lodging house keeper, a house servant and 7 other lodgers.
2. Also in household: father Thomas Burnell, wdr, 59, ag labourer; bro-in law wdr, 29 y, silk weaver; niece Jemima Lenton, 7y, scholar – all Coventry-born.
3. Sharing a house with a widow, 62 y, her daughter and 4 boarders.
RG9/2202.33-36.5-10 ED11

Table 3.19 Court 8 Well Street: Irishcom Residents[1] of the 27 Houses therein 1861-91 as shown on Map 3.9				
No	**1861[2]**	**1871**	**1881**	**1891**
2 a	Ann Daley, H, Widow, 40, Charwoman, Galway Mary Daley, D, U, 9, -, Coventry John Daley, S, U, 3, -, Coventry ~~1871, 1881~~	Mark Cronin, H, M, 89, Labourer, I Mary Cronin, W, M, 75, -, I 1861: 2C6 Fleet St ~~1881~~ (Mark: 1861 Labourer) James Clabey, Lodger, 60, Lab, I ~~1861, 1881~~		
2 b	Edward Fallin, H, M, 40, Rag & Bone gatherer, Roscommon Bridget Fallin, W, 41, -, Roscommon ~~1871,1881~~ Patrick McDermott (Deaf), Boarder, Wdr, 40, Shoe maker, Roscommon John McDermot, Boar, U, 11, - , Rosc Mary McDermot, Boar, 6, -, 6, Rosc ~~1871, 1881~~			
3	John Shocknecy, H, M, 36, Lab, Galw Catherine Shocknessy, W, M, 40, -, Tipperary Co 4 children eldest 9 all born in Coventry 1871 & 1881: 21 Palmer Lane (John: 1871:Dealer, 1881: Dealer in Old Clothes)		Thomas Moran, H, M,50, Farmer's Lab, Roscommon Eliza Moran, W, M, 48, -, Kings Co ~~1871 1891~~	
4			Philip Harrity, H, 49, Gen Lab, I 1871: 125 Far Gosford St 1891: 2C1 Chapel St {Lodger to widow Margaret Carr} (Philip: 1871: Traveller, 1891: Labourer) Martha Harrity, W, M, 50, Coventry 1871: 125 Far Gosford St ~~1891~~ (Martha: 1871: Charwoman) John Harrity, S, U, 11, -, Coventry	
6		Michael Carr, H, M, 50, Bricklayer's Lab, I 1861 ~~1881~~ (1861: C6 Greyfriars Lane. 1861: Labourer) Margaret Carr, W, 46, Laundress, I ~~1861 1881~~ Michael Herrity (Blind), B in Law, U, 35, Lab, I ~~1861~~ 1881 Same Add Edward Herrity, U, 33, Bricklayer's Lab, I 1861 ~~1881~~. (1861 Lab in 1C6 Fleet St	Margaret Gore, H, W, 58, Laundress, I ~~1871 1891~~ Michael Harriety, Boarder, U, 35, Gen Lab, I 1881: Same address ~~1891~~	
14	John Macker, H, U, 52, For Farmer, I Hannah Dwyer, Sister, W, 48, -, I Patrick Dwyer, S, U, 20, Sawyer, I ~~1871, 1881~~ Mary Shaughney, Vis, U, 20, Laundress, I ?1871: 3C5 Greyfriars Lane, 1881: Well St. Rooms (Mary: 1871: Charwoman, 1881: Charwoman Out of Employment)			

Table 3.19 Continued Court 8 Well Street				
No	**1861**	**1871**	**1881**	**1891**
16		John Bracken, H, Wdr, 62, Marine Store Dealer, I 1861: 12 New Building 1881: 10C9 Well Street (John: 1861: Hawker of Small Wares, 1881 Hawker) Thomas Bracken, S, U, 19, Marine Store Dealer, Coventry		
18	James Harvey, H, M, 33, Labourer, I Hannah Harvey, W, M, 30, -, I 6 children eldest 10 all born in Coventry 1871: 2C2 Well Street 1881: James: Lodging House 79&78 Gungate, Tamworth, Staffs., Hannah & Family:1C1 Little Park St. (James: 1871: Hawker, 1881: Ag lab unemployed. Hannah: 1881: Rag Dealer)	Owen Grogan, H, M, 50, Lab, I Mary Grogan, W, M, 41, -, I Catherine Grogan, D, U, 19, Ribbon Weaver, Coventry Mary Ann Grogan, D, U, 19, Cotton Spinner, Coventry John Grogan, S, U, 13, Cotton Spinner, Coventry 4 children eldest 10 all born in Coventry 1861: 4C13 Well Street 1881: 19C8 Well St (Owen: 1861: Bricklayer's Labourer, 1881: Ditto)	Eliza Conroy, H, W, 58, Laundress, I Mary Ann Conroy, D, U, 22, Cotton Spinner, Coventry John Conroy, S, U, 19, Lab out of Work, Coventry, William Conroy, S, 15, U, Cotton Spinner, Coventry Thomas M, Conroy, S, U, 12, Scholar, Coventry	See Note 3
19			Owen Grogan, H, M, 60, Bricklayer's Lab, I ~~1891~~ Mary Grogan, W, M, 60, -, Mayo 1871: 19C8 Well Street 1891: 14C48 Spon Street Mary Ann Grogan, D, U, 26, Cotton Spinner, Coventry John Grogan, S, M, 23, Bricklayer's Lab, Coventry Lizzie Grogan, DinLaw, M, 21, filler (Silk) Coventry 3 children eldest 16 all cotton reelers born in Coventry.	
24	Bryan Harvey, H, M, 48, Jobbing Labourer, I Ellen Harvey, W, M, 40, Charwoman, I 1871: 3C1 Chauntry Place. 1881: 18 Henry St. (Bryan: 1871 Ag lab, 1881: labourer)	James Stuart, H, U, 72, Marine Store Dealer, I ~~1861 1881~~ {Also 29year Coventry born niece and one lodger}		

1. Where a family arrangement existed, results are normally shown for Irish-born head of household because it was continued locational presence or absence that was of interest.
2. 1861: 20 year check forward; 1871: 10 year check back and 20 year check forward; 1881: 10 year check back and 10 year check forward.
3. The only Irishcom family in the Court in 1891 consisted of: Eliza Conroy, H, W, 65, -, I; John Conroy, S, U, 30, Gen Lab, Coventry; William Conroy, U, 24, Cycle Machinist, Coventry; Michael Conroy, U, 22, Cycle Machinist, Coventry. (In 1861 Eliza was married to William, a shoemaker, both from Rathdowney, Queens Co.).
4. The absence of house numbering precludes investigation of 1851

RG9/2206.41.11 ED 3; RG10/3179.39.10 ED 3; RG11/3071.37.10 ED 3; RG12/2452.12.17 ED 1

Table 4.1
Marriage Register Parish of St. Osburg's 1850 and until 30th March 1851 with details of married couple matched where possible to Census of 1851

	1	2	3	4	5
	Married Couple in Register. Birthplace and address added from Census if located	**First Couple Names**	**Second Couple Names**	**Married Couple if Found in 1851, with Occupation and Age: Male/Female**	**I ?**
	1850				
1	Alfred Palmer – Ann Litchfield	None	None	No	N
2	Thomas Farrell – Mary Kelly	Thomas & Elanor	Timothy & Margaret	Not definitively	P
3	Daniel Collis - Mongh? Sullivan	Binmis? & Mary	Darby & Ronal?	No	P
4	Sampson Richards Coventry – Bridget Kennedy Dublin *New Buildings*	Sampson & Ann	Michael & Ann	Coventry 1851 Engineer (Silk M) 23 / Weaver 23	Y
5	John Elliott Coventry – Rose Clark Newry *Greyfriar Lane*	John & Mary	Hugh & Bridget Thuroy? Hurley	Coventry 1851 Cordwainer 62 / Hawker 52	Y
6	William Huson Ireland – Mary Stagg London, Middx. *Chauntry Place*	William & Cecelia	Edward & Mary	Coventry 1851 Silk Weaver 28 / Silk Weaver 26	Y
7	Henry Baker England Assumed – Mary Ann Kennedy Ireland	Son of Mary	Michael & Ann	No. Found in 1861: Mary Ann Baker 36 Widow Ribbon Weaver	Y
8	John Pinches – Mary Harris	William & Lydia	John & Elizabeth	No	N
9	Hugh Rowley – Harriet Liggins	John & Catherine	Jonathan & Mary Ann	No	N
10	Owen Grogan Ireland –Mary Geoghegan Ireland *Fleet St*	John & Bridget	Patrick & Bridget	Coventry 1851 Labourer 26 / Laundress 22	Y
11	~~~~Conoly – Winifride Connery	~~~~Mary	Mark & Mary	No	P
12	Martin Kilroy Ireland – Ann Ryan Ireland *5 Birchall Tce, Birmingham*	Laurence Margaret	Michael & Ann	No. Found in Birmingham in 1861: Labourer 37 / - 31	Y
13	Austin Daniel – Eliza Tinsley	Joseph & Agnes	James & Hannah	No. Found in Coventry 1861	N
14	Thomas Roach Ireland – Rose Brady Meath *42 Much Park St*	Michael & Sarah	Michael & Rose	No. Found in 1861: Thomas Ag Lab in Sheldon (Assumed)/ Provision Dealer 30	Y
15	Martin Dowd – Margaret Kearns	Thomas & Catherine	Thomas & Mar~~	No	P

Table 4.1 Continued
Marriage Register Parish of St Osburg's 1850 and until 30th March 1851 with details of married couples matched where possible to Census of 1851

1851					
16	John Dwyer Ireland – Ann Armstrong (Birthplace Unstated, Ireland assumed) Widow *Gray Friars Lane*	Martin & Bridget	Patrick & Ann Neil	Coventry 1851 Shoemaker 41/ - 37(1861: Hannah Dwyer born Ireland)	Y
17	Patrick Kilroy Ireland – Ellen Ryan Ireland *Palmer Lane*	Laurence & Margaret	Michael & Jane	Coventry 1851 Labourer 20 / Washer Woman 22	Y
18	Edward Fitzpatrick Ireland – Elanor Lynch Ireland *Spon St*	Patrick & Francis	John & Maria	Coventry 1851 Ag Labourer 40 / - 38	Y
19	Thomas Davany Mayo – Sarah Daffally Ireland *H3C12 St. Johns St*	Thomas & Judith	Patrick & Mary	No. Found in Coventry 1861: Labourer 32 / - 32	Y
20	John Brooks Dublin - Sarah Pickward Coventry *Hill St*	Richard & Elanor	W~~~ & Lucy Pickward	Coventry 1851 Hand Loom Rib Weaver 36 / Silk Filler 39	Y
21	~Rora?~ [Horatio] Weatherill – Eliza Kinsella	Joseph Stephen & Francis Weatherill	William Catherine Witness Joseph Hart	No. No evidence on 'Kinsella'	N
22	Wm Pinches – Charlotte Noon	William & Lydia	Benjamin Susannah Bird	No.	N
23	William Hennesy – Catherine Powell	William & Maria Hennesy	Patrick & Elizabeth Powell	No 'Powell' possible Irish parent	P

Column 1: Green = Irishcom, Red = British-born with no previously noted Irish connection marrying an Irishcom.

Columns 2 and 3: It is assumed first and second couple names were parents but may have been sibling witnesses as in the case of William and Cecelia Huson.

Column 4: Shows occupation and age of married couple. Some further census investigation was undertaken beyond 1851 if it was suspected that there was an Irish connection. Details are shown if found.

Column 5: Conveys if married couple was considered to have been Irishcom - Y = Yes, N = No, P = Possibly.

The census for 1851 was taken on 30th March.

Table 4.2
Hopkins Household 1851-1871 showing Catholic identity & census 'Deterioration' of household in twenty years

Sch/No Street	Name	Rel to Head	C	A M	A F	Occupation	Birth place
1851: 62 Leicester Street	Pat Hopkins	Head	M	45			Mayo
	Mary Hopkins	Wife	M		30		Mayo
	Catherine Hopkins	Dau	U		15	The only occupation	Mayo
	Mary Hopkins	Dau	U		11	given	Mayo
	Michael Hopkins	Son	U	9		All Roman Catholic	Mayo
	Pat Hopkins	Son		3			Mayo
	Martin Hopkins	Son		2m		Labourers [1]	Mayo[2]
	Pat Walsh	Head	W	40			Mayo
	Pat Walsh	Son	U	16		Do	Mayo
	Matthew Bourk	"	U	32		Do	Mayo
	Pat Murdock	"	U	20		Do	Mayo
	Bridget Connolly	"	U		20		Mayo
1861: 1C3 Brewery St	Pat Hopkins[3]	Head	M	56		Garden Labourer	Ireland
	Mary Hopkins	Wife	M		46	Garden Labourer	Ireland
	Michael Hopkins	Son	U	19		Garden Labourer	Ireland
	Martin Hopkins	Son		10		Scholar	Coventry
1871: 2C2 Brewery St	Mary Hopkins	Head	W		56	Charwoman	Ireland

1. Written as per original 'The only occupation given All Roman Catholic Labourers'
2. Stated as born in Coventry in 1861
3. Also 2 lodgers: Irish-Born James Garogham, 56y, General Labourer and his 10 year old Coventrian son

HO107/2068.128.19 ED 1f; RG9/2207.15.5 ED 9; RG10/3182.58.25 ED 25

Table 4.3 Benedictine Monks serving Coventry from Hill Street Priory during the Nineteenth Century[1]			
Name	**Out of:**	**Time in Coventry**	**Then:**
Rector			
Dom John Dawber	L	1803 - 1810	Died at Coventry
Dom Ambrose Allam	G	1810 - 1812	Left Coventry
Dom Ambrose Feraud	G	1812 - 1824	Left Coventry
Dom Basil Bretherton	L	1824 - 1827	Left Coventry
Dom Austin Marsh	E	1827 - 1830	Left Coventry
Dom Anselm Cockshoot	L	1830 - 1838	Left Coventry. Died 1872
Dom Bede Day	L	1838 - 1840	Left Coventry
Dom Ephrem Pratt	G	1838 - 1840	Left Coventry. Died 1875
Dom Alexius Pope	G	1840 - 1841	Died at Coventry
Dom Stephen Barber	G	1841 - 1841	Left Coventry
Dom William Bernard Ullathorne	G	1841 - 1846	Left Coventry. Died 1889
Dom Athanasius Clarkson	E	1846 - 1850	Left Coventry. Died 1864
Dom Ephrem Pratt	G	1850 - 1870	Left Coventry. Died 1875
Dom Thomas Cuthbert Smith	G	1870 - 1872	Left Coventry. Died 1884
Dom Edmund Moore	G	1872 - 1891	Left Coventry. Died 1899
Dom Antonio Ambrose Pereira	G	1891 - 1896	Left Coventry. Died 1923
Dom Clement Fowler	G	1896 - 1903	Left Coventry. Died 1929
Assistant			
Dom Athanasius Clarkson	E	1842 -1846	
Dom Ignatius Sutton	L	1846 - 47; 1850 - 51; 1854 - 56	
Dom Placid Sinnott	G	1847-1850	
Dom Wilfrid Price	G	1852, April, June:1856 - 1857	
Dom John Placid O'Brien	L	1852 - 1854	
Dom Cuthbert Smith	G	1856 - 1859	
Dom Edmund Moore	G	1859 - 1872	
Dom Ambrose Pereira	G	1870 - 1884	
Dom Julian O'Hare	G	1879 - 1879	
Dom Placid Rea	G	1880 - 1889	Died in Coventry Jan 1915
Dom Willibrord van Volckzsom	G	1884 - 1884	
Dom Paul McCabe	E	1886 - 1891	
Dom Edmund Tunny	E	1888 - 1889	
Dom Adrian Beauvoisin	L	1890 - 1891	
Dom Gabriel Geary	L	1892 - 1892	
Dom Norbert Birt	G	1892 - 1895	
Dom Benedict Weld Blundell	G	1893 - 1895	
Dom Richard O'Hare	G	1896 - 1896	
Dom Vincent Corney	G	1897 - 1897	
Dom Adrian Hewlett	G	1898 - 1900	

G= St Gregory Downside (Bath, Somerset)

E= St Edmund Douai (Woolhampton, Berkshire)

L= St Lawrence Ampleforth (North Yorkshire)

Other Benedictines resided in the priory. Notably Bishop Collier who lived there in retirement here from 1873-90. Also Dom Thomas Austin Rolling (G) 1850-1851, Dom Paulinus Heptonstall (G) 1852-53 and Dom John Jenkins 1871

[1] Simpson, Centenary Memorial of Saint Osburg's, p. 52

Table 4.4
Baptisms administered from Chapel of St. Mary & St. Laurence 1835-1841

Year	Number	Sub Conditione	Total
1826	48		48
1827	56		56
1828	59		59
1829	41		41
1830	61		61
1831	117		117
1832	62		62
1833	78		78
1834	87		87
1835	80	18	98
1836	88	30	118
1837	96	24	120
1838	58	36	*94
1839	68		68
1840	53	1	54
1841	55		55
*31 in Workhouse See footnote note [2]			

[2] These figures are close approximates due to the nature of the handwriting and the irregular layout on various pages. These figures should not be taken as city resident baptisms. A number of those baptised were stated as having come from Foleshill, a district adjacent and north of Coventry. Five were from Longford in 1838, a district that was a little farther north than Foleshill. Three baptisms were of privates from the barracks in 1835, six privates sought baptism in 1836, and there was one barrack baptism in 1839.

Table 4.5 Roman Catholic Attendance at Public Worship, and Irish-born in Census 30th March 1851 in Coventry. Similar for a Selection of Administrative Areas[3]

Area	Population	Churches	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Total Attendance	Area	Total Population	Irish-Born	Morning attend as % of I-born
Coventry	36,208	1	900	300	1,000	2,200	City	36,812	698	129
Birmingham B	232,841	4	3,383	378	1,346	5,107	Borough	232,841	9,341	36
Wolverhamp-ton Reg Dist*	104,158	2	1,280	700	1,500	3480	Registratio n District	104,158	4,930	26
Leicester B	60,584	1	636	185	497	1,318	Borough	60,586	877	73
Northampton Reg District^	33,857	1	300			300	Municipal^	26,657	403	15
Nottingham B	57,407	2	1,420	312	604	2,336	Borough	57,407	2,004	71
York City	36,303	2	1,350	251	780	2,381	City	36,283	1,928	70

In any columnar comparison it should be noted the Irish attendance at church would be Irishcom, i.e. would include Coventry-born co-residing children.

*Matching figures for Wolverhampton Borough not available. ^ Nearest match: data only available at areal level shown.

Comment: In assessment, allowance must be made for the following realities. It cannot be assumed that all Irish-born Catholics attended worship in St. Osburg's on that date. Lees concluded that for London there were two Catholic populations: a minority of active members and the majority who sought out the church for ceremony only at times of birth and death, if at all.[4] Bossy remarked that about half the immigrants effectively practiced their religion when they came to England. [5]

Attendance figures could also include local-born children of the Irish-born; the Coventry Irishcom total of 1,542 in 1851 represents a better figure for contrast than the 698 Irish-born necessarily displayed. Nor is it known if the Irish in the Barracks were permitted to attend St. Osburg's. Attendance would also have included non-Irish Catholics, including the conversions already mentioned from Ullathorne's time when he thought there were about one hundred converts each year.[6] Champ provided insight into the ratio of Irish to non–Irish in the 1851 church attendances. She suggested the Catholic population of Birmingham in 1851 lay between 13,500 and 14,800, and according to her with the majority of the between 9,000 and 11,500 Irish being Catholics, she submitted that approximately two-thirds of the Catholic population were Irish by mid-century. For her also the 3,383 morning attendance was a radical understatement of the possible congregation and was based more on the church accommodation provision, but could she conceded be also attributed to a low level of Mass attendance among the Irish. Regrettably she refers to an 'Irish' figure, so it is unclear if offspring of Irish-born were incorporated in her calculation.[7] It seems wise to follow Champ's focus on morning attendance to gauge the Catholic congregation, which is a practice also maintained by Bossy. He presumed the afternoon attendance was at a Catechism or Sunday school while the evening attendance was to hear a lecture or instruction of some kind.[8]

---

[3] Census of Great Britain 1851, *Religious worship (England and Wales): Report and Tables* PP 1852–53 LXXXIX [1690] pp. ccliii,cclvi,cclxi,cclxvi,cclxxii,32,73,77,80; Census of Great Britain1851, PP 1852-53 LXXXVIII Pt.I.1 [1691-I] p. 526; Census of Great Britain1851, PP 1852-53 LXXXVIII Pt.II.1 [1691-II] pp. 605,737. For the background to this census see Edward Higgs, The Religious Census of 1851 *Online Historical Population Reports*, http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/View?path=Browse/Essays%20(by%20kind)/General&active=yes&mno=2062 Accessed 22nd February 2018
Also Frances Coakley, *The 1851 Religious and Educational Censuses* (1998) http://www.isle-of-man.com/manxnotebook/methdism/rc1851/rcu1851.htm Accessed 21st January 2019

[4] Lees, *Exiles of Erin*, p. 182

[5] Bossy, *English Catholic Community*, p. 313

[6] Ibid., p. 319

[7] Judith F. Champ, 'Assimilation and Separation: The Catholic Revival in Birmingham C1650-1850'. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham 1984 p. 29

[8] Bossy, *English Catholic Community*, p. 313

Table 4.6
Social and occupational progress: John Kelly, City Councillor and his son Walter Kelly Abbot President of the English Benedictines

Street	Name	R to H	C	A M	A F	Occupation	Birthplace
1841							
Upper Well Street	Patrick Kelley	Head		35		Weaver	Ireland
	Ann Kelley	Wife			35		Ireland
	John Kelley	Son		10			Y (Same Co)
	Ann Kelley	Dau			6		Y (Same Co)
	James Kelley	Son		5m			Y (Same Co)
1851							
148 Spon Street	Patrick Kelley	Head	M	45		Hand loom weaver silk	Dublin
	Ann Kelley	Wife	M		50		Dublin
	John Kelley	Son		20		Ribbon Weaver	Coventry
	Ann Kelley	Dau			16	Ribbon Weaver	Coventry
	James Kelley	Son		10		Scholar	Coventry
1861							
126 Queen Street	Patrick Kelly	Head	M	55		Silk ribbon weaver	Ireland
	Ann Kelly	Wife	M		61	Silk ribbonweaver	Ireland
	James Kelly	Son		20		Silk ribbon weaver	Coventry
1861							
30 Spon Street	John Kelly[1]	Head	M	30		Licensed victualler	Coventry
	Mary A. Kelly	Wife	M		23		Coventry
	John Kelly	Son		3			Coventry
	Mary A.Kelly[2]	Dau			9m		Coventry
1871							
16 Earl Street Cross Keys	John Kelly	Head	M	40		Licensed victualler	Coventry
	Mary A Kelly	Wife	M		32		Coventry
	John Kelly[3]	Son		13			Coventry
	Walter Kelly[4]	Son		8			Coventry
	Agnes Kelly	Dau			5		Coventry
	Elizab' Kelly	Dau			3		Coventry
	James Kelly	Son		1			Coventry
	Ann Kelly	Mot	W		71		Ireland

Table 4.6 Continued
Social and occupational progress: John Kelly, City Councillor and his son Walter Kelly Abbot President of the English Benedictines

1881							
	William Eccles[5]	Head	M	48		Licensed victualler	N Duffield Yorks
	Mary A Eccles[6]	Wife	M		43		Coventry
	Mary A Kelly	Dau			20		Coventry
	Mary E Kelly	Dau			13	Scholar	Coventry
	James Kelly[7]	Son		10		Scholar	Coventry
	Thomas Kelly[8]	Son		5		Scholar	Coventry

1. Only included in 1871 due to presence of his mother Ann. John died 25th May 1877. He was licensee of the Mechanics Arms 1861-69. He was a Guardian of the Poor in June 1876. Also, Mary Watts, servant, 15y, b. Coventry.
2. In 1871Mary Ann was a boarder in St. Joseph's Boarding School, Gosford Terrace, run by the Sisters of Mercy See Table 3.31
3. Died April-June 1880 age 22
4. In 1911, RC Priest, Vice-President Douai Abbey, Woolhampton, Berks. His choice of Douai may have been influenced by the rare presence in Coventry of Benedictines out of Douai: namely Dom Paul McCabe (During1886-91) and Dom Edmund Tummy (During 1888-1891). At the beginning of 1925 he was elected Abbot President of the English Benedictine Congregation (The *Tablet* 3rd Jan 1925).
5. Next name on the 1911 enumeration schedule was Joseph Griffin, 31y, RC Parish Priest, followed by William Ludford, 36y, RC Priest Bursar to Abbey & School, both of whom were born in Coventry. Joseph was son of a Coventry born butcher living in 30 Victoria Street in 1880 with no apparent Irish connection. It was not possible to clearly link William Ludford the RC Priest with William Ludford, the weaver mentioned in the Introduction.
6. Also, Kate Hadlord, Domestic servant, 16y, b. Atherstone.
7. Mary A Eccles was the widow of John and had remarried by 1881. She was a widow again in 1891 and died herself in April 1900.
8. James Kelly in 1911 was a cycle frame maker.
9. Thomas was a 'licensed victualler manager' in Aston in 1911.

Census 1841-1911; RG9/2203.71.2 ED 21; *Coventry Herald* 9th June 1876

Chapter 5 Tables

Table 5.1
Irish-born and Irishcom numbers residing in *Irish Households* and also residing in *English Households containing Irish* in Study Area, 1841-61. Irish-born are a subset of Irishcom

		Irish Households						***English Households containing Irish***						Total Irish-com in House holds	Total Irish-com in Reg Dist *Hholds & Instit-utions*
		Irish-born			Irishcom			Irish-born			Irishcom				
Year		**'41**	**'51**	**'61**	**'41**	**'51**	**'61**	**'41**	**'51**	**'61**	**'41**	**'51**	**'61**		
Hhold Total		311	636	623	731	1,234	1,361	123	152	86	147	173	105		
'41	**Ib**	311			+			123						434	565
	Ic				731			+			147			878	1,040
'51	**Ib**		636		+				152					788	892
	Ic					1,234		+				173		1,407	1,545
'61	**Ib**			623	+					86				709	795
	Ic						1,361	+					105	1,466	1,566
Ratio of Irish-born to Irishcom in households: 1841{1:2.0}; 1851{1:1.8}; 1861{1:2.1}															
Source: ADB															

Table 5.2
Irish-born male change in Coventry 1841-1901

Year	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
	Actual decennial number and change:						
	238 (+203)	**441** (-104)	**338** (-112)	**226** (-53)	**175** (-22)	**153** (+56)	**209**
Found in the earlier but not the following census: Loss							
1841/51	173						
1851/61		305					
1861/71			229				
1871/81				140			
1881/91					114		
1891/01						89	
Found in the earlier and in the following census:							
1841/51	65						
1851/61		136					
1861/71			109				
1871/81				89			
1881/91					61		
1891/01						64	
Not in the earlier but in the following census: Gain							
1841/51	379						
1851/61		202					
1861/71			117				
1871/81				88			
1881/91					92		
1891/01						145	

The loss figures will include an unknown number of deaths that may have been greater later in the century. The figures also are subject to the difficulty of matching names between censuses. Barracks excluded. Source: ADB

Table 5.3
Marital status of solo Heads, of Heads with spouses and whether Irishcom or Irish-born in *Irish Households* 1841-1901

Year	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
Head 'without spouse' marital condition							
Irish-born unmarried male 18 or >	8	8	3	4	1	3	2
Irish-born male married – no wife		3	5	2	3	2	1
Irish-born widower		7	8	12	5	11	5
Irish-born unmar female 18 or >	18	3	7	7	5	1	
Irish-born female married – no husband		7	11	6	11	1	8
Irish-born widow		24	37	32	29	34	16
Household Total	**26**	**52**	**71**	**63**	**54**	**52**	**32**
Head 'with spouse' marital condition							
Irish-born male married to Irish-born female	60 *(40.3)*	91 *(41.2)*	119 *(48.0)*	70 *(36.6)*	35 *(28.2)*	19 *(19.6)*	21 *(16.6)*
Irish-born male married to Irishcom female	51 *(34.2)*	70 *(31.7)*	72 *(29.0)*	63 *(33.0)*	47 *(37.9)*	42 *(43.3)*	68 *(47.5)*
Irishcom male married to Irish-born female	37 *(24.8)*	59 *(26.7)*	56 *(22.6)*	58 *(30.4)*	42 *(33.9)*	36 *(37.1)*	53 *(37.0)*
Irish-born male married to female birthplace not stated		1	1				1
Irishcom female married to Irish-born	1						
Household Total	**149**	**221**	**248**	**191**	**124**	**97**	**143**
Total Households	**175**	**273**	**319**	**254**	**178**	**149**	**175**

No husband/wife = No husband/wife present. Irishcom in Head 'with spouse' marital condition section may be also referred to in the interest of clarity as Non-Irish.
Source: ADB

Table 5.4 Percentage distribution of family size in *Irish Households* Coventry 1841-1901 and for Coventry Households in 1851 and 1881

No. in Family	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	Cov 1851	Cov 1881
	%							%	
1	*6.9*	*8.1*	*7.5*	*9.8*	*12.3*	*16.8*	*6.8*	*12.4*	*12.1*
2	*28.6*	*24.9*	*22.3*	*25.6*	*25.3*	*28.9*	*28.5*	*24.0*	*22.2*
3	*14.9*	*18.7*	*21.3*	*20.5*	*15.7*	*15.4*	*22.2*	*18.2*	*16.8*
4	*13.1*	*15.4*	*17.2*	*10.6*	*15.2*	*10.7*	*12.0*	*15.5*	*15.1*
5	*15.4*	*12.8*	*13.8*	*13.4*	*9.6*	*10.7*	*12.0*	*11.4*	*11.9*
6	*7.4*	*10.3*	*11.0*	*8.3*	*9.0*	*9.4*	*4.5*	*7.8*	*9.1*
7	*6.9*	*5.9*	*2.8*	*3.5*	*6.7*	*1.3*	*5.7*	*5.3*	*5.8*
8	*1.1*	*1.8*	*3.4*	*3.1*	*3.9*	*2.0*	*5.1*	*2.9*	*3.4*
9	*4.0*	*1.5*	*.6*	*4.3*	*2.2*	*4.0*	*2.8*	*1.4*	*1.9*
10	*1.1*	*.4*		*.8*	*.6*			*.8*	*.1*
11	*.6*	*.4*						*.1*	*.5*
12 +						*.7*		*.1*	*.1*
Total No.	175	273	319	254	178	149	175	7,712	9,658
Average size	3.94	3.77	3.77	3.78	3.70	3.43	3.73	3.64	3.83

Coventry figures exclude Barracks, Institutions and *Irish Households* but do include *English Households containing Irish.*

Coventry 1851: 15 Non-headed units. Coventry 1881: 12 Non-headed units

Source: ADB

Table 5.5
Size of *Irish Households* and size of Coventry Households in 1851 and 1881. Also showing the number of occasions when households kept lodgers.

	Irish Households								Coventry Households			
	Household				Lodging occasions				Household		Lodging occasions	
Year	1851		1881		1851		1881		1851	1881	1851	1881
HH Size		%		%		%		%	%	%	%	%
1	7	*2.6*	11	*6.2*					*3.9*	*4.5*		
2	41	*15.0*	31	*17.4*	3	*1.7*	1	*6.3*	*16.8*	*16.6*	*10.3*	*10.7*
3	41	*15.0*	28	*15.7*	6	*3.5*	2	*12.5*	*18.1*	*18.5*	*17.4*	*18.5*
4	42	*15.4*	30	*16.9*	8	*4.6*	4	*25.0*	*17.7*	*17.0*	*18.0*	*20.2*
5	39	*14.3*	23	*12.9*	8	*4.6*	2	*12.5*	*14.7*	*14.1*	*15.5*	*16.9*
6	43	*15.8*	20	*11.2*	11	*6.4*	1	*6.3*	*10.8*	*11.0*	*12.0*	*12.2*
7	21	*7.7*	12	*6.7*	5	*2.9*	1	*6.3*	*8.1*	*7.6*	*9.8*	*8.6*
8	10	*3.7*	7	*3.9*	3	*1.7*	2	*12.5*	*4.4*	*5.0*	*5.8*	*6.4*
9	13	*4.8*	10	*5.6*	5	*2.9*	1	*6.3*	*2.7*	*2.8*	*4.1*	*2.9*
10	5	*1.8*	4	*2.2*	2	*1.2*			*1.6*	*1.5*	*2.7*	*1.8*
11	2	*.7*	1	*.6*	2	*1.2*	1	*6.3*	*.5*	*.8*	*1.5*	*.5*
12	3	*1.1*			3	*1.7*			*.3*	*.3*	*1.2*	*.3*
13	4	*1.5*			3	*1.7*			*.2*	*.1*	*.6*	*.3*
14	1	*.4*	1	*.6*	1	*.6*	1	*6.3*	*.1*	*.1*	*.5*	*.2*
15+	1	*.4*			1	*.6*			*.2*	*.1*	*.8*	*.7*
Total	273		178		61		16		7,727	9,670	1,086	1,076
Aver		5.0		4.5					4.5	4.5		

Total lodgers 187 which was 13.7% of all in *Irish Households* in 1851.
Total lodgers 46 which was 2.5% of all in *Irish Households* in 1881.
Lodging figures could consist of Irish, Non-Irish or a combination of both.
Total Coventry Households lodgers 2,136 which was 6.1% of all persons in such households in 1851.
Total Coventry Households lodgers 1,804 which was 4.2% of all persons in such households in 1881.

Coventry Households excludes *Irish Households* but includes *English Households containing Irish.* Barracks excluded and Institutions excluded.
Source: ADB

Table 5.6
Percentage of *Irish Households* and Coventry Households in each Household unit size according to the frequency of Heads Family sizes for 1851

Hhold Unit Size	Heads Family Size																							
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10		11		12	
	IH	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH		CH
	% Frequency																							
1	***31.8***	*30.7*																						
2	***22.7***	*29.5*	***52.9***	*54.5*																				
3	***18.1***	*15.3*	***17.6***	*22.1*	***49.0***	*59.5*																		
4	***13.6***	*11.2*	***7.3***	*11.9*	***15.7***	*21.9*	***61.9***	*60.8*																
5	***4.5***	*6.2*	***7.3***	*5.2*	***13.7***	*10.5*	***14.2***	*21.2*	***57.1***	*65.0*														
6		*2.9*	***2.9***	*2.6*	***15.7***	*3.6*	***19.0***	*10.3*	***17.1***	*20.4*	***67.8***	*66.3*												
7		*1.8*	***2.9***	*1.6*	***3.9***	*2.1*		*3.7*	***11.4***	*7.3*	***14.2***	*20.0*	***56.2***	*76.8*										
8		*.9*	***2.9***	*.4*		*1.3*		*1.5*		*3.0*	***3.5***	*7.9*	***12.5***	*11.9*	***60.0***	*73.5*								
9		*.5*	***2.9***	*.4*		*.6*	***2.3***	*.8*	***5.7***	*2.0*		*2.6*	***18.7***	*6.0*	***20.0***	*14.3*	***100.0***	*74.5*						
10	***9.0***	*.1*		*.2*		*.07*	***2.3***	*.6*	***2.8***	*.7*		*1.6*	***6.2***	*2.9*	***20.0***	*7.1*		*13.6*	***100.0***	*86.4*				
11		*.1*		*.05*				*.08*		*.6*	***7.1***			*1.2*		*2.6*		*5.4*		*6.7*		*90.9*		
12				*.1*		*.1*		*.2*	***2.8***	*.1*	***3.3***	*.3*	***6.2***	*.4*		*.4*		*4.5*		*3.3*		*9.0*		
13		*.1*	***1.4***		***2.0***	*.07*		*.08*			***3.5***	*.4*		*.2*		*.8*		*.9*		*1.6*	***100.0***			*50.0*
14			***1.4***	*.1*		*.07*		*.08*				*.3*				*.4*		*.9*						*25.0*
15		*.1*				*.07*			***2.8***	*.1*		*.1*				*.4*								*25.0*
16																				*1.6*				
17		*.1*						*.08*		*.1*				*.2*										
19										*.1*														
21				*.05*		*.07*																		
24				*.05*																				
38										*.1*														
Irish Hhlds	**22**		**68**		**51**		**42**		**35**		**28**		**16**		**5**		**4**		**1**		**1**			
Cov Hhlds		957		1,852		1,407		1,193		881		604		411		223		110		59		11		4

No *Irish Hhlds*: 273, No Cov Hhlds: 7712. The latter includes 107 *English Households containing Irish* Source: ADB

Table 5.7
Number, birthplace and condition of yet to marry children in *Irish Household* head families*1841-1901

Year	'41	'51	'61	'71	'81	'91	'01
Irish-born unmarried male under 18	15	44	19	8	5	6	15
Irish-born unmarried male 18 or over	3	9	13	4	5	3	2
Irish-born unmarried female under 18	17	28	21	4	6	5	14
Irish-born unmarried female 18 or over	8	13	24	7	4	3	1
Irish-born female marital status unst			1				
Irish-born Total	**43**	**94**	**80**	**23**	**20**	**17**	**32**
'Irishcom' unmarried male under 18	155	192	229	200	125	77	113
'Irishcom' unmarried male of 18 or over	3	19	30	31	38	39	33
'Irishcom' unmarried female under 18	155	204	246	224	134	91	124
'Irishcom' unmarried female 18 or over	9	28	38	38	54	43	33
'Irishcom' male of 18 or > mar stat unst			1				
'Irishcom' Total	**322**	**443**	**542**	**493**	**351**	**250**	**303**
Total	**365**	**537**	**622**	**516**	**371**	**267**	**335**

*1841 under 20 and over. 1841 assumed unmarried

In the interest of clarity 'Irishcom' i.e. Irishcom in parenthesis may be also referred to as Non-Irish-born children of Irish-born parent(s) or local-born chidren of Irish-born parent(s)
Source: ADB

Table 5.8

Age of the yet to marry child first in the family to be born in Coventry * and not elsewhere, co-resident with its Irish-Born *Irish Household* married head shown as a percentage of the total number of same 1841-1901

Year	1841		1851		1861		1871		1881		1891		1901	
Age		%		%		%		%		%		%		%
35+	1	*1.3*									4	*7.7*	1	*1.7*
30-34					1	*.9*	2	*2.3*	2	*4.3*	2	*3.8*	3	*5.1*
25-29			1	*1.2*			2	*2.3*	3	*6.4*	5	*9.6*	5	*8.5*
20-24	1	*1.3*	6	*7.0*	7	*6.1*	8	*9.2*	10	*21.3*	16	*30.8*	1	*1.7*
15-19	10	*12.8*	13	*15.1*	8	*7.0*	29	*33.3*	6	*12.8*	8	*15.4*	7	*11.9*
10-14	24	*30.8*	24	*27.9*	21	*18.4*	22	*25.3*	11	*23.4*	2	*3.8*	6	*10.2*
5-9	21	*26.9*	10	*11.6*	44	*38.6*	10	*11.5*	8	*17.0*	9	*17.3*	16	*27.1*
0-4	21	*26.9*	32	*37.2*	33	*28.9*	14	*16.1*	7	*14.9*	6	*11.5*	20	*33.9*
Total	78		86		114		87		47		52		59	
Irish Hhlds (I-Born Married Head)	111		162		192		133		82		61		90	

* For Warwickshire in 1841, as data only available at county level Source: ADB

Table 5.9
Status of *Irish Household* Heads' Grown-up co-residing children who were ever married or if unmarried had offspring and the nature and occurrence of their families 1851-1901

Year	'51	'61	'71	'81	'91	'01
Solo 12						
Irish-born male married				1		
Irish-born female married			1			
'Irishcom' male married				4		
'Irishcom' female married		1	3	4	1	1
'Irishcom' widower		1	1			
'Irishcom' widow				2	1	
Nuclear 'Grown up children' Sub-Family Occurrences						
Irish-born male married to Irish-born female				1		
'Irishcom' male married to 'Irishcom' female		2		1	1	
'Irishcom' male married to 'Irishcom' female + 1 offspring		3		1	1	1
Irish-born male married to 'Irishcom' female + 2 offspring		1	1			
'Irishcom' male married to 'Irishcom' female + 3 offspring	1					
Irish-born male married to Irish-born female + 4 offspring	1					
Marital condition of Non-Nuclear 'Grown Children's Sub-Families						
Irish-born unmarried female 18 or > + 1 off	1		1		1	
'Irishcom' unmarried female 18 or > + 1 off		1	1		1	
'Irishcom' male married – no wife + 1 off		1		1		
'Irishcom' female married – no husband + 1 off	1	1	4	1		
Irish-born widow +1 offspring		2				
Marital condition of 'Grown-up Children's' offspring in Sub-Families i.e. grandchildren						
Irish-born unmarried male under 18						
'Irishcom' unmarried male under 18		5	1	2	1	1
'Irishcom' unmarried female under 18		5	5	2	2	

~ 1841 relationships not identifiable. No husband/wife = No husband/wife present.
In the interest of clarity 'Irishcom' may be also considered as the Non-Irish-born offspring (grandchildren) of the adult children of an Irish-born parent. Source: ADB

Table 5.10 *Irish Households*: Arrangement and occasions occurring of co-resident types according to the size of the Heads Family, 1861

Kin		Serv		Lodger		Visitor		App		Size of Heads Family									
K	IK	S	IS	L	IL	V	IV	A	IA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	T
										10	43	38	34	24	22	7	8	1	187
								1			1						1		2
								2				1							1
							1					1	1		1				3
							1	1	1					1					1
							2					1							1
						1						1	1						2
						4	1						1						1
					1					1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1		9
					2							1	1	1					3
					3					1	2	1			1				5
					4										1				1
					9							1							1
				1							3	3	1	4					11
				1	1					3	1								4
				2							3		1						4
				4							2	1							3
				4	5						1								1
				5								1							1
				5	4									1					1
				6	4										1				1
				7						1									1
				17	2							1							1
			1								1								1
		1									3	1	2	1					7
		2											1	1	1				3
		2				1									1				1
		3												1					1
		4				1		2										1	1
	1									3	6	4	4	1	3				21
	1				1									1					1
	1				2							2							2
	1				3								1		1				2
	2										1	3	2	2	1		1		10
	2						1			1									1
	2				2								1						1
	2		1								1								1
	3									2	1	2							5
	4									1				1					2
	4			1										1					1
1										1	1	2		2		1			6
1	1												1						1
1	1				1								1						1
2													2						2
3															1				1
3	2													1					1
6	**15**	**5**	**2**	**11**	**15**	**4**	**5**	**4**	**1**	Table includes as Irish kin, those co-resident 'Grown children' described in Table 5.8.									319

Total occasions occurring Source: ADB

Table 5.11 The percentage holding at each Lodger and Kin size according to the heads marital status for *Irish Households*. Showing for *English Households containing Irish* and Coventry Households the percentage holding by size amounts for same in 1851-61

	Irish Households										*Eng Hhds cont Irish*	Cov Hhds
	Irish-born/ Irish-born		Irish-born/ Irishcom		Irishcom/ Irish-born		Solo Heads		Total			
	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1851
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Lod												
0	*70.3*	*77.1*	*87.1*	*88.7*	*86.2*	*87.5*	*67.3*	*81.4*	***77.5***	***82.8***	***45.8***	***86.5***
1	*1.1*	*8.5*	*4.3*	*4.2*	*8.6*	*10.7*	*11.5*	*5.7*	***5.5***	***7.2***	***16.8***	***8.2***
2	*13.2*	*5.1*	*7.1*	*4.2*	*3.4*		*9.6*	*7.1*	***8.8***	***4.4***	***7.47***	***2.6***
3	*1.1*	*5.1*	*1.4*		*1.7*			*1.4*	***1.1***	***2.2***	***5.6***	***1.4***
4	*3.3*	*.8*		*2.8*		*1.8*	*3.8*		***1.8***	***1.2***	***6.5***	***.7***
5	*3.3*						*1.9*	*1.4*	***1.5***	***.3***	***4.7***	***.2***
6	*2.2*						*3.8*		***1.5***		***3.7***	***.2***
7	*2.2*						*1.9*	*1.4*	***1.1***	***.3***		***.1***
8											***.9***	***.1***
9	*1.1*	*1.7*						*1.4*	***.4***	***.9***	***2.8***	***.01***
10	*1.1*	*.8*							***.4***	***.3***	***.9***	***.03***
11	*1.1*								***.4***		***1.9***	***.01***
12												***.03***
18											***.9***	***.01***
19		*.8*								***.3***		
21											***.9***	
31											***.9***	
Total	27	27	9	8	8	7	17	13	61	55	26	1028
Kin												
0	*85.7*	*81.5*	*82.86*	*76.4*	*81.0*	*89.3*	*84.6*	*78.9*	***83.8***	***81.2***	***69.2***	***83.5***
1	*7.7*	*8.4*	*14.29*	*13.9*	*8.6*	*5.3*	*9.6*	*14.1*	***9.9***	***10.3***	***17.8***	***10.3***
2	*1.1*	*6.7*	*2.86*	*6.9*	*6.9*	*3.6*	*1.9*	*2.8*	***2.9***	***5.3***	***10.3***	***3.8***
3	*3.3*	*.8*		*2.8*	*1.7*	*1.8*	*1.9*	*2.8*	***1.8***	***1.9***	***1.9***	***1.4***
4		*1.7*					*1.9*	*1.4*	***.4***	***.6***	***.9***	***.6***
5		*.8*			*1.7*				***.4***	***.3***		***.2***
6	*1.1*								***.4***			***.1***
10	*1.1*								***.4***			
Total	13	22	12	17	11	6	8	15	44	60	33	1255
Total Units	91	119	70	72	59	56	52	71	273	319	107	7,620

1851=Irish lodgers 124, Non-Irish 63, Total 187. 1851=Irish kin 61, Non-Irish kin 22, Total 83
1861=Irish lodgers 76, Non-Irish 80, Total 156. 1861=Irish kin 83, Non-Irish kin 19, Total 102
In rows with zero lodgers and zero kin: There was in 1851: 1 other married couple, i.e. Irish-born male married to female, birthplace not stated. There was in 1861: 1 other married couple, i.e Irish-born male married to female, birthplace not stated.
Coventry Households excludes *Irish Households* and Barracks. This table includes under Kin those co-resident 'Grown children' described in Table 5.9 Source: ADB

Table 5.12
Marital status of solo Lodgers, Kin, and Visitors and whether they were Irishcom or Irish-born in *Irish Households* and *English Households containing Irish* 1841-61

	Irish Households			***English Households containing Irish***		
Year	**1841**	**1851**	**1861**	**1841**	**1851**	**1861**
Lodgers						
Irish-born unmarried male under 18	1	1	1	2	4	
Irish-born unmarried male 18 or over	8	36	18	52	41	11
Irish-born male married – no wife		2	3		6	2
Irish-born widower		4	1		5	2
Irish-born unmarried female under 18	1	4	1			
Irish-born unmarried female 18 or over	7	14	8	12	7	3
Irish-born female married – no husband		3	1		3	2
Irish-born widow		1	5			4
'Irishcom' male married					1	
'Irishcom' unmarried female under 18		1	3			
Kin						
Irish-born unmarried male under 18	1		3		1	
Irish-born unmarried male 18 or over	4	3	5			
Irish-born male married – no wife		1				
Irish-born widower		1	1		1	
Irish-born unmarried female under 18	3	5	2	2		
Irish-born unmarried female 18 or over	3	1	6			1
Irish-born female married – no husband		2	3			
Irish-born widow		2	4		2	1
'Irishcom' unmarried male under 18	1	5	8			
'Irishcom' unmarried female under 18	6	5	9			
'Irishcom' unmarried female 18 or over		1	1			
Visitors	~			~		
Irish-born unmarried male 18 or over		4	1		7	
Irish-born male married – no wife					2	
Irish-born widower			1		1	
Irish-born unmarried female 18 or over		5	1			
Irish-born female married – no husband		2				
Irish-born widow		2	2			2
Irish-born male marital status unknown		1				

~ 1841 Not identifiable. This table does not include as Kin those who were co-resident solo 'Grown children' described in Table 5.9. Unlike Table 5.10 this Table does not include any Lodgers, Kin or Visitors deemed to have insufficient Irish affiliation. Source: ADB

Table 5.13
The number of *English Households containing Irish* in Coventry 1841-1901 and the number of Irish-born and Irishcom therein

		1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
Hhold No		83	107	70	45	54	71	93
Irish-born		122	152	86	48	60	78	112
Irish-born above as a % of Irish-born in *Irish Hholds*	**%**	*39.5 Total Hhold No=* 309	*23.9 Total Hhold No=* 636	*13.8 Total Hhold No=* 624	*11.9 Total Hhold No=* 403	*22.9 Total Hhold No=* 261	*36.9 Total Hhold No=* 211	*43.6 Total Hhold No=* 257
Irishcom (includes Irish-born) in *Eng Hholds con Irish*		145	173	105	53	63	84	119

Source: ADB

Table 5.14
Details of Heads of *English Households containing Irish* with size of household, number of Irish co-residing and their relationship to the Head 1861

G	M	A	*	Occupation	Observation	R	H	Ic	Ib
F	W	38	1	Coach trimming maker	MOTHER Born S'hampton, Sons 8 & 3, 1 other f lodger Son	C	5	1	1
M	M	44	2	Ostler	FATHER Born Weston W'wshire. Mother 58 born Leics Son	C	3	1	1
M	M	38	3	Boots at inn	FATHER Wife 41 silk winder, sis u 5 scholar, all b Cov Son	C	4	1	1
M	W	40	4	Chemist & druggist	FATHER Born Lancashire, 4 sisters and 1 brother Son	C	7	1	1
M	M	51	5	Pension Chelsea	FATHER Wife, 3 sons, 1 other daugh Dau	C	7	1	1
			6	No evid' of Head	Dau top of family b P'tsmouth, also dau b Chatham Kent Son	C	3	1	1
F	M	42	7	Laundress	MOTHER 1 brother Dau	C	3	1	1
M	M	38	8	Boot shoe agent	FATHER Wife, 1 servant Son	C	3	1	1
M	M	34	9	Labourer at gas works	FATHER X 2 Wife, 3 other sons in law, 1 lod. {2 Irish were sons in law} Sons	C	8	2	2
M	M	47	10	Collector of Inland Revenue	FATHER X 2 William Hickling, Wife, 2 sons, and 1 dau {Another son & dau & 1 servant were Irish-born} Son & Dau	C/ S	8	3	3
M	M	30	11	Silk weaver	FATHER Born Nuneaton W'w'ks', 1 son, 2 other daus Dau	C	6	1	1
M	M	54	12	Gardener	FATHER X 2 Wife, 3 daughters and 2 other sons Sons	C	9	2	2
M	M	63	13	Schoolmaster	FATHER Wife, 3 sons and 4 other daughters Dau	C	10	1	1
F	W	64	14	Marine store dealer	FATHER X 2 Son age 5. Both born in Coventry {son placed as kin on age difference grounds} Daus	C	4	2	2
F	W	60	15	Seamstress	MOTHER who was born Scotland, son 25 gardener born in Coventry. Married Newbridge born daughter now 35 living with mother Dau	C	4	2	1
M	U	32		Vet surgeon & innkpr	1 other lodger and 7 servants	L	10	1	1
M	M	64		Silk weaver	1 other lodger	L	4	1	1
F	M	44		Charwoman	Only lodger	L	2	1	1
M	M	66		Confectioner	1 other lodger	L	6	1	1
M	M	29		Vict'ler & Whitesmith	Wife, daughter, Servant, and 3 other boarders	L	8	1	1
M	M	46		Ribbon weaver	Wife, daugh, g.daugh, and an u 18 f lodger	L	6	1	1
M	M	64		Barber & Chel pens	Wife, 6 other boarders	L	12	4	3
F	W	72		Lodging house keep'r	A house servant and 7 other lodgers.	L	13	4	4
F	W	34		Charwoman	Her 5 children, niece and 2 other lodgers	L	10	1	1
M	M	24		Umbrella maker	Wife son and a female visitor	L	5	1	1
M	M	45		Clerk to wine merch't	Wife, 2 visitors and a servant	L	6	1	1
				No evidence of Head	9 other lodgers	L	10	1	1
M	M	34		Watch finisher	Wife, 2 sons and 2 daughters	L	7	1	1
M	M	71		Ribbon weaver	Wife and 3 other lodgers	L	6	1	1
M	W	45		Ribbon weaver		L	2	1	1
M	M	42		Shoe maker & publ'n	Wife, 3 daughters and 3 other lodgers	L	12	4	1
M	M	35		Publican	Wife, 3 daughters, mother, servant and 4 other lodgers	L	12	1	1

Table 5.14 Continued

			No evidence of Head		L	1	1	1
M	M	55	Wool stapler & publ'n	Wife	L	3	1	1
M	M	66	Watch case maker	Lodging House, 25 West Orchard. 5 other lodgers (Head at 24)	L	13	8	5
M	M	27	Saddler	Wife, 1 servant and 10 other lodgers	L	15	2	2
F	W	49	Laundress	2 daughters	L	4	1	1
M	M	56	Labourer	Wife, 2 daughters, 1 other lodger	L	6	1	1
M	M	32	Metal dealer	Wife, niece, and 2 lodgers	L	6	1	1
F	W	60	Silk winder	Son, and 3 other lodgers	L	6	1	1
M	M	67	Milk seller	Wife and 2 sons. Also 67 years old widowed lodger born Northampton. 1 same named to her I-b.	L	7	2	1
M	M	45	Brickmaker	Wife, daughter, 2 sons, and 1 other lodger	L	7	1	1
M	M	48	Lath cutter	Wife and brother	L	6	3	1
F	W	55	Proprietor of houses	Her son, brother, niece, 1 other f servant	S	6	1	1
M	M	55	Stone mason	Employing 7 men and 3 boys and wife	S	3	1	1
M	M	44	Ribbon manufacturer	Wife, 4 children, 1 male u 18 year old app	S	8	1	1
M	M	32	Printer and publisher	Wife, son, 2 sisters and 1 brother	S	7	1	1
M	U	59	Roman Catholic priest	Another priest, 1 other servant and a school mistress	S	5	1	1
M	M	75	Gentleman	Wife and daughter	S	6	3	1
M	Un	33	Clock & watchmaker	Brother in law and 2 lodgers	S	5	1	1
M	W	39	Watchmaker	2 daughters and 1 son	S	5	1	1
M	M	37	Watchmaker	Wife and 2 daughters	S	5	1	1
M	M	40	General dealer	Born Prussia, wife, 4 daus, son & a visitor	S	9	1	1
F	U	29	Confectioner	Also a sister	S	3	1	1
F	U	26	Victualler	2 sisters, nephew and servant	S	6	1	1
M	M	57	Licensed victualler	Wife	S	3	1	1
M	M	57	Licenced victualler	Wife, 4 children, and sister in law	S	8	1	1
M	M	36	Ribbon manufacturer	Wife, daughter, housemaid, and nursemaid	S	6	1	1
F	W	68	Independent	Daughter and son	S	4	1	1
M	M	43	Ribbon manufacturer	Wife, 2 sons, 2 daughters and 1 other serv	S	8	1	1
M	M	46	Licenced victualler	Wife	S	3	1	1
F	U	19	Silk Picker	Head: Elizabeth Cardley b Coventry. Sister from Co. Cork	K	2	1	1
M	M	28	Watch dial painter	Head: John McGee, b L'pool, wife & son b Coventry. Mother	K	4	1	1
F	W	56	Silk winder	Head: Eliz Wilson b Bedworth. A daughter, 2 lods. Brother & Dublin-born sis-in-law & nephew	K	7	3	1
M	M	37	Watch motioner	Wife, nephew	B	4	1	1
M	M	52	General dealer	Wife, 3 daughters and 1 other visitor	V	7	1	1
F	W	40	Silk filler	Daughter, son, 2 other visitors.	V	6	1	1
14	M	23	Watch finisher	Wife, 2 lodgers and 1 other visitor. All called Harrow	X	6	1	1
F	M	40	Laundress	Visiting 'wife & 2 young children'. Lodging 'wife & a young child'	Y	6	5	2
M	M	33	Licenced victualler	Wife, nephew and 12 other lodgers	Z	17	2	1

Column Legend: G = Gender, M = Marital condition, A = Age, * Corresponding with Table 5.15, H = Size of household, Ic = Irishcom, I = Irish-born.
Column R shows Irishcom relationship to Head: B = Apprentice, C = Child (may be adult) of Head, K = Kin, L = Lodger, S + Servant, X = Kin as Visitor, Y = Visitors and lodger, Z = Lodger b. Belfast and his wife a servant of household b. Cov.
Source: ADB

Table 5.15
An adjunct Table to Table 5.14. The Irish-born children of heads of *English Households containing Irish* 1861

*	Head	H	I-b	Name	AM	AF	Occupation	B'place
1	Coach trim'g maker	5	1	William Kingstucy	15			Dublin
2	Ostler	3	1	Thomas Maycock	14		Watchfinisher	Ireland
3	Boots at inn	4	1	Joseph Timpkins	17		Smith & gasfitter App	Dublin
4	Chemist and druggist	7	1	Arthur J Harding	6		Scholar	Dublin
5	Pensioner Chelsea	7	1	Amanda Tidinas		17	Silk winder	Athlone
6	No evidence of Head	3	1	Thomas J Tunks	12		Scholar	Mullinger
7	Laundress	3	1	Mary Ann Wimcott		10		Ireland
8	Boot shoe Ag	3	1	Charles Pratt	12		Scholar	Belfast
9	Labourer at gas works	8	2	Francis Beale	13			Dublin
				John Beale	10			Westport
10	Collector of Inland Rev	8	3	John James Hickling	9		Scholar	Ireland
				Ada Hannah Hickling		7	Scholar	Ireland
11	Silk weaver	6	1	Eliza Tatten		4		Ireland
12	Gardener	9	2	James B B Frost	22		Designer & Art pupil teacher	Ireland
				George H Frost	20		Printer's clerk	Ireland
13	Schoolmaster	10	1	Hannah M Prentice		17	Ribbon weaver	Dundalk
14	Marine store dealer	4	2	Phillifira Woolcock		22	Silk warper	Cornwell I
				Sara Woolcock		19		Cornwell I
15	Seamstress	4	2	Margaret Miles[1]		35	Dressmaker	Newbridge

* Corresponding with Table 5.14.
H = Size of household, I = Irish-born in household.
1. Margaret Miles who lived with her mother was married and had a young daughter – husband not present. Source: ADB

Table 5.16 Irish county of birth. Also number who supplied 'Ireland' as place of birth 1851-1901 Source: ADB

	County	1851		1861		1871		1881		1891		1901	
			%		%		%		%		%		%
1	Antrim	4	***1.4***	13	***4.1***	5	***2.4***	4	***2.3***	6	***3.7***	15	***8.9***
2	Armagh			1	***.3***	5	***2.4***	1	***.5***	3	***1.8***	1	***.6***
3	Carlow	1	***.3***	2	***.6***			1	***.5***	2	***1.2***	1	***.6***
4	Cavan	2	***.7***	1	***.3***	1	***.4***	1	***.5***				
6	Cork	12	***4.1***	28	***8.8***	21	***8.7***	10	***5.7***	18	***11.3***	21	***12.5***
7	Derry									1	***.6***	3	***1.8***
8	Donegal			1	***.3***								
9	Down	2	***.7***	1	***.3***	3	***1.2***	2	***1.1***	1	***.6***	8	***4.8***
10	Dublin	108	***37.1***	135	***42.6***	100	***41.4***	69	***39.8***	53	***33.3***	69	***41.3***
11	Fermanagh	4	***1.4***			1	***.4***						
12	Galway	18	***6.2***	16	***5.0***	8	***2.9***	6	***3.4***	7	***4.4***	3	***1.8***
13	Kerry	8	***2.7***	1	***.3***	3	***1.2***			1	***.6***		
14	Kildare	2	***.7***	2	***.6***	2	***.8***	5	***2.9***	4	***2.5***	6	***3.6***
15	Kilkenny	6	***2.1***	5	***1.6***	6	***2.4***	3	***1.7***	3	***1.8***	1	***.6***
16	Laois			7	***2.2***			4	***2.3***			4	***2.4***
17	Leitrim			3	***.9***	2	***.8***	5	***2.9***				
18	Limerick	4	***1.4***	2	***.6***	1	***.4***			5	***3.1***	3	***1.8***
19	Longford	1	***.3***	1	***.3***			2	***1.1***	2	***1.2***		
20	Louth	3	***1.0***	1	***.3***	2	***.8***			2	***1.2***	1	***.6***
21	Mayo	62	***21.3***	44	***13.9***	40	***17.0***	31	***17.9***	26	***16.3***	15	***8.9***
22	Meath			1	***.3***	4	***1.6***			1	***.6***		
23	Monaghan	1	***.3***	1	***.3***								
24	Offaly			4	***1.3***			4	***2.3***	6	***3.7***	1	***.6***
25	Roscommon	22	***7.6***	24	***7.6***	18	***7.4***	9		1	***.6***	3	***1.8***
26	Sligo	12	***4.1***	3	***.9***	3	***1.2***	2	***1.1***	2	***1.2***	1	***.6***
27	Tipperary	3	***1.0***	12	***3.8***	5	***2.0***	5	***2.9***	3	***1.8***	1	***.6***
28	Tyrone	4	***1.4***			1	***.4***						
29	Waterford	5	***1.7***			1	***.4***	2	***1.1***	2	***1.2***		
30	Westmeath	1	***.3***	2	***.6***	2	***.8***	2	***1.1***	7	***4.4***	2	***1.2***
31	Wexford	1	***.3***	6	***1.9***	5	***2.0***	4	***2.3***			5	***3.0***
32	Wicklow	5	***1.7***					1	***.5***	3	***1.8***	3	***1.8***
	Total & % of I-b by named co	291 *N= 808*	***36.0***	317 *N= 723*	***43.8***	239 *N= 480*	***50.3***	173 *N= 353*	***48.0***	159 *N= 314*	***50.4***	167 *N= 406*	***41.1***
	'Ireland'	517		406		241		180		155		239	
	Not stated			2									
	Barracks	Ireland 71		Ireland 71 Dublin 1		Ireland 10, Clare 2, Dublin 2, Limerick 2, Belfast 1		Ireland 14		Ireland 15		Ireland 11	

Table 5.17
Birthplace of Irishcom whose relationship to a Head was that of an unmarried Son or Daughter 1851-1901

Year	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
Ireland	105	96	23	25	35	63
%	*19.2*	*15.0*	*4.5*	*6.7*	*12.3*	*17.0*
(Coventry)	331	455	412	281	184	220
%	*60.4*	*70.3*	*80.0*	*75.8*	*63.9*	*59.6*
(Birmingham)	5	10	4	11	6	13
Rest of Warw*	20	18	22	18	21	15
Bedfordshire			1			
Buckinghamshire			1			
Cambridgeshire	2					
Cheshire	15	8	4			
Derbyshire	13	4	1	1		
Devon	1				2	2
Essex			1	1		1
Hampshire		1	2	1		8
Hertfordshire	1		1			1
Kent	2		2	1	2	17
(Liverpool)	2	2	3	3	4	3
(Manchester)	5	5	3		4	
Rest of Lancs*	4	5	6	3	5	3
Leicestershire	4	4				1
London	8	6	9	8	5	6
Lincolnshire						1
Middlesex	1			3		
Norfolk		2				1
Northamptonshire	11	4	1	1	1	
Northumberland	1	1	1		1	4
Nottinghamshire	1	1				
Shropshire	3	1				1
Staffordshire	3	4	4	4	5	5
Suffolk	1					
Surrey			1		2	
Sussex				1		
Wiltshire				1	1	
Worcestershire		1	1		1	1
Yorkshire	3		1	3	1	
England	1	5	4			
Wales					2	
Scotland			1			1
Europe	2	3				1
New York		1				
Halifax N A				2		
E+W Indies	3	2	4	3	2	
India			2		3	1
Not stated		1				
Total	548	640	515	371	287	369

* 'Rest of Warwickshire' excludes cities in brackets and includes 'Warwickshire' when only that is stated in census. Similarly for Lancashire. A minute number of unmarried daughters with their offspring, having been classified as subfamilies, did not come within the ambit of this Table. Source:ADB

Table 5.18

Age and Sex structure of Irish-Born, Irishcom and also Coventry Host Population expressed in percentage form 1841-61

	Irish-Born						Irishcom						Coventry Host					
	%						%						%					
	Male			Female			Male			Female			Male			Female		
Age	'41	'51	'61	'41	'51	'61	'41	'51	'61	'41	'51	'61	'41	'51	'61	'41	'51	'61
80+	.4	.2	.3		1.1	.8	.2	.4	.1		.6	.4	.5	.4	.3	.6	.4	.5
75-79		.2	1.2	.5	.3	.8	.2	.3	.7	.2	.1	.4	.6	.6	.6	.6	.8	.6
70-74	.4	1.8	2.1	.5	.5	1.8	.4	1.2	1.4	.2	.3	1.0	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.3
65-69	1.7	1.1	3.0	3.4	1.6	2.8	.9	1.1	1.4	1.8	.9	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.7
60-64	4.2	2.9	8.6	7.2	3.3	4.9	3.1	2.9	4.6	3.6	2.2	3.6	2.5	2.4	2.8	2.8	2.4	2.6
55-59	1.7	3.2	7.7	3.4	3.5	6.2	1.5	1.9	4.6	2.0	2.6	3.4	2.2	2.7	3.3	2.2	2.8	3.2
50-54	6.3	7.5	10.1	8.2	6.0	7.5	4.6	4.7	5.3	4.9	4.4	5.2	4.0	4.0	4.4	3.9	3.9	3.9
45-49	5.9	8.4	6.8	3.4	4.9	8.1	4.2	5.6	4.5	2.5	3.6	5.2	3.9	4.7	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.5
40-44	16.8	10.0	10.9	11.1	10.4	10.9	9.5	7.5	6.5	8.1	7.3	7.0	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.4	5.6
35-39	13.0	7.9	7.1	10.6	10.6	7.0	8.2	6.2	4.6	6.5	7.2	4.5	6.0	6.1	6.1	5.4	5.8	6.4
30-34	17.6	10.4	11.2	13.5	13.6	11.2	10.4	8.3	7.2	9.0	9.3	7.3	7.7	7.6	6.9	7.5	7.4	7.3
25-29	9.7	8.8	9.2	10.1	12.8	11.7	6.4	6.3	6.5	6.7	8.9	7.5	8.0	8.3	7.5	8.3	8.6	8.6
20-24	8.8	15.6	8.6	11.1	12.0	12.7	5.8	10.9	7.2	7.9	9.0	9.9	10.2	9.9	8.8	10.8	10.7	9.9
15-19	6.3	7.5	6.8	6.7	7.9	7.5	6.0	8.6	6.3	7.2	9.8	8.4	9.8	10.1	9.3	10.6	11.1	10.4
10-14	3.8	7.3	4.1	4.8	6.8	3.1	7.7	12.6	9.1	10.1	11.9	5.9	10.5	11.4	10.7	9.9	11.0	9.9
5-9	1.7	4.8	2.4	3.4	2.7	1.6	12.6	8.5	13.8	13.9	11.2	14.2	11.6	10.9	11.7	10.9	10.6	10.4
0-4	1.7	2.3		2.4	1.9	1.3	18.1	13.0	16.0	15.3	10.8	14.6	13.9	12.7	13.9	13.8	11.5	13.1
Total	238	441	338	210	367	385	452	731	694	445	697	786	*N=1841: Male 14,110 Female 15,723 N=1851: Male 16,818 Female 18,397 N=1861: Male 18,812 Female 21,119*					

Barracks excluded from all columns and Irishcom from Host population
Irishcom figure as per normal includes Irish-born
Source: ADB and Censuses: 1841: PP 1843 Vol. 22 pp. 300, 301, 1851: PP 1852-3 Vol. 88 Pt 1 p. 427, 1861: PP 1863 Vol. 53 Pt 2 p. 439

Table 5.19
Male-to-female ratios for Irish-born, Irishcom and Coventrian Host groupings 1841-1901

	Irish-Born			Irishcom			Coventrian Host		
Year	**M**	**F**	**M:F**	**M**	**F**	**M:F**	**M**	**F**	**M:F**
1841	238	210	113.3:100	452	445	101.6:100	14,118	15,728	89.8:100
1851	441	367	120.2:100	731	697	104.9:100	16,818	18,397	91.4:100
1861	338	385	87.8:100	694	786	88.3:100	18,812	21,119	89.1:100
1871	226	254	89.0:100	527	609	86.5:100	18,259	20,549	88.9:100
1881	175	178	98.3:100	395	438	90.4:100	20,834	23,287	89.5:100
1891	153	161	95.0:100	317	355	89.3:100	25,299	26,878	94.1:100
1901	209	197	106.1:100	421	427	98.6:100	33,471	35,846	93.6:100

Barracks excluded in all columns. Irishcom excluded from Coventry figures.
1871 Coventry Area = ED 393
Source: ADB and Census Abstracts 1841-1901

Table 5.20

Marital condition by age of Irishcom 1851-61 and from the Census abstracts for Coventry the condition of the Host population 1851-61.

Age	Irishcom												Coventry Host					
							%						%					
	1851			1861			1851			1861			1851			1861		
	Unm	Mar	Wid	Unm	Mar	Wid	Unm	Mar	Wid	Unm	Mar	Wid	Unm	Mar	Wid	Unm	Mar	Wid
Male																		
75 +		3	1		6			*1.1*	*4.2*		*2.1*			*1.7*		*.8*	*1.0*	*12.5*
65-		12	5	3	13	4		*4.4*	*20.8*	*4.0*	*4.6*	*20.0*		*5.0*		*.9*	*5.0*	*24.4*
55-	4	28	3	3	52	9	*3.3*	*10.3*	*12.5*	*4.0*	*18.2*	*45.0*		*9.3*		*.8*	*12.2*	*22.9*
45-	12	52	9	7	59	3	*9.8*	*19.2*	*37.5*	*9.3*	*20.7*	*15.0*		*15.7*		*6.1*	*20.3*	*19.5*
35-	12	84	4	6	67	3	*9.8*	*31.0*	*16.7*	*8.0*	*23.5*	*15..0*		*21.7*		*5.8*	*26.9*	*12.4*
25-	35	71	1	27	67	1	*28.7*	*26.2*	*4. 2*	*36.0*	*23.5*	*5.0*		*28.8*		*28.0*	*27.9*	*7.4*
20-	56	21	1	29	21		*48.4*	*7.7*	*4.2*	*38.7*	*7.4*			*17.9*		*57.7*	*6.7*	*1.0*
Total 20 & >	**119**	**271**	**24**	**75**	**285**	**20**							2,187	6,414	644	2,132	7,410	704
													N=9,245			N=10,246		
15 -	62	1		44														
Female																		
75 +		2	3		1	5		*.7*	*7.9*		*.3*	*7.7*		*2.1*		*1.0*	*.6*	*12.8*
65-		3	4	1	10	9		*1.1*	*10.5*	*1.2*	*3.4*	*13.8*		*5.1*		*1.7*	*3.5*	*24.5*
55-	1	22	9	3	30	22	*1.4*	*7.9*	*23.7*	*3.5*	*10.1*	*33.8*		*9.4*		*4.4*	*10.4*	*23.3*
45-	4	41	10	4	61	17	*5.6*	*14.6*	*26.3*	*4.7*	*20.6*	*26.2*		*15.3*		*4.9*	*18.5*	*18.2*
35-	3	91	9	9	72	9	*4.2*	*32.5*	*23.7*	*10.5*	*24.3*	*13.8*		*20.1*		*10.3*	*27.1*	*13.8*
25-	30	94	3	27	87	2	*42.3*	*33.6*	*7.9*	*31.4*	*29.4*	*3.1*		*28.7*		*31.3*	*30.8*	*6.7*
20-	36	27		42	35	1	*46.5*	*9.6*		*48.8*	*11.8*	*1.5*		*19.2*		*46.3*	*9.1*	*.6*
Total 20 & >	**71**	**280**	**38**	**86**	**296**	**65**							2,655	6,416	1,193	3,037	7,564	1,277
													N=10,264			N=11,878		
15 -	67	1		65	1													

Barracks excluded in all columns. Irishcom excluded from host population. The 1841 census does not provide information on marital condition. Census Abstracts for 1851 only supply totals for those '20 years and upwards'and from 25 upwards in twenty year intervals (without indication of marital condition). This Table presentation is based on that provision.

Source ADB and Census: 1841: PP 1843 Vol 22 pp 302,303; 1851: PP 1852-53 Vol 88 Pt 1 pp 427,441; 1861: PP Vol 53 Pt 2 p 456.

Table 5.21
Marital condition and age of *Irish Household* Heads 1841-61 and similar for Coventry Host Household Heads 1851

Age	Heads of *Irish Households*																Heads of Coventry Host Households					
	1841				1851						1861						1851					
			%					%						%						%		
	Solo	M	Solo	M	Un	M	Wd	Un	Mar	Wd	Un	M	Wd	Un	M	Wd	Un	Mar	Wd	Un	M	Wd
Male																						
75+		1		*.7*		3			*1.3*			4			*1.6*		1	56	36	*.5*	*1.0*	*9.4*
65-		5		*3.4*		11			*4.9*			10			*4.0*		7	262	84	*3.3*	*4.5*	*21.9*
55-	1	17	*12.5*	*11.5*	2	23	1	*25.0*	*10.3*	*14.3*		48	3		*19.0*	*37.5*	14	641	85	*6.6*	*10.9*	*22.1*
45-	2	30	*25.0*	*20.3*		49	3		*21.9*	*42.9*	2	51	3	*66.7*	*19.8*	*37.5*	30	1159	98	*14.2*	*19.7*	*25.5*
35-	5	52	*62.5*	*35.1*	2	71	3	*25.0*	*31.7*	*42.9*		65	2		*25.8*	*25.0*	41	1597	66	*19.3*	*27.2*	*17.2*
25-		38		*25.7*	2	51		*25.0*	*22.8*		1	59		*33.3*	*23.4*		80	1747	15	*37.7*	*29.7*	*3.9*
20-		5		*3.4*	2	16		*25.0*	*7.1*			16			*6.3*		34	412		*16.0*	*7.0*	
15-																	5	8		*2.4*	*.1*	
Total	8	148			8	224	7				3	253	8				212	5882	384			
Female																						
75+							3			*12.5*			4				6	1	68	*2.7*	*.6*	*8.3*
65-	3		*16.7*				3			*12.5*		1	3		*9.1*	*10.8*	17	7	160	*7.6*	*4.1*	*19.6*
55-	4		*22.2*			1	5		*14.3*	*20.8*	1	1	11	*14.3*	*9.1*	*8.1*	21	23	228	*9.4*	*13.5*	*27.9*
45-	7		*38.9*		1		6	*33.3*		*25.0*	2	2	11	*28.6*	*18.2*	*29.7*	38	50	186	*17.0*	*29.2*	*22.8*
35-	2	1	*11.1*	*100.0*		3	6		*42.9*	*25.0*	2	2	6	*28.6*	*18.2*	*16.2*	43	44	120	*19.3*	*25.7*	*14.7*
25-	1		*5.6*		2	2	1	*66.7*	*28.6*	*4.2*	1	5	2	*14.3*	*45.4*	*5.4*	61	38	52	*27.4*	*22.2*	*6.4*
20-	1		*5.6*			1			*14.3*		1			*14.3*			30	7	2	*13.5*	*4.1*	*.2*
15-																	7	1		*3.1*	*.6*	
Total	18	1			3	7	24				7	11	37				223	171	816			
Total	26	149			11	231	31				10	264	45				435	6,053	1,200			
	N=175				N=273						N=319						N=7,688					

Barracks and Institutions excluded in all columns. Heads of *Irish Households* excluded from host population. The 1841 census does not provide information on marital condition. The 1841 condition figures in the Table are an approximation based on an assumed marriage relationship where the head is followed by a same surnamed opposite gendered person of similar years.

Solo = Individuals, Single parents, Widowed.

Coventry Host: 23 households with no evidence of head. Also marital condition unstated: 5 at 25-, 2 at 35-, 5 at 45-, 1 at 55-, 2 at 65-, 1 at 75+. Source: ADB

Table 5.22
Social classification based on occupation of Irish-born and Irishcom 1841-1861

Class	Irish-born						Irishcom					
	1841		1851		1861		1841		1851		1861	
		%		%		%		%		%		
Male												
1	3	***1.4***	19	***5.1***	7	***2.2***	3	***1.1***	20	***4.0***	7	***1.6***
2	1	***0.4***	16	***4.3***	15	***4.8***	1	***.4***	21	***4.2***	22	***5.0***
3	150	***71.8***	177	***47.1***	149	***47.5***	192	***72.5***	262	***52.4***	248	***56.5***
4	19	***9.1***	30	***8.0***	31	***9.9***	27	***10.2***	39	***7.8***	42	***9.6***
5	36	***17.2***	134	***35.6***	112	***35.7***	42	***15.8***	158	***31.6***	120	***27.3***
		N=209		N=376		N=314		N=265		N=500		N=439
X	29	***(12.2)***	65	***(14.7)***	24	***(7.1)***	187	***(41.4)***	231	***(31.6)***	255	***(36.8)***
Female												
1	2	***2.2***	1	***.5***	3	***1.3***	2	***1.6***	1	***.3***	3	***.8***
2			3	***1.5***	3	***1.3***			3	***.9***	3	***.8***
3	74	***82.2***	118	***58.7***	116	***49.6***	107	***84.9***	233	***69.8***	220	***61.1***
4	12	***13.3***	62	***30.8***	68	***29.1***	14	***11.1***	72	***21.6***	83	***23.1***
5	2	***2.2***	17	***8.5***	44	***18.8***	3	***2.4***	25	***7.5***	51	***14.2***
		N=90		N=201		N=234	445	N=126		N=334		N=360
X	120	***(57.1)***	166	***(45.2)***	151	***(39.2)***	319	***(71.7)***	363	***(52.2)***	426	***(54.1)***

Class distribution recalculated with Class X removed. Barracks excluded. Source: ADB

Table 5.23
Irish-born, and British-born 'Irish' weavers in the ribbon trade 1841-1891

	Hand-loom Weavers					No elucidation on how loom was powered				
	Irish - born Male	British -born 'Irish' Male	Irish-born Female	British - born 'Irish' Female	Total	Irish - born Male	British - born 'Irish' Male	Irish-born Female	British -born 'Irish' Female	Total
1841	77	21	35	14	144					
1851	36	19	12	20	87	54	14	30	24	122
1861						52	32	35	44	163
1871						20	18	13	29	80
1881						7	5	11	11	34
1891						4	2	4	6	16
1901						2		2	3	7

1841: Assumed that all weavers were hand loom. No Irish ribbon weavers in workhouse. Average age of the 77 Irish-born male weavers was 38.9 years.
1851: No Irish ribbon weavers in workhouse. Average age of the 90 Irish-born male weavers was 40.5 years.
1861: Not included - 8 male weavers and 1 female weavers all Irish-born residing in workhouse. Average age of the 52 Irish-born male weavers was 48.1 years.
1871: Not Included - 3 Irish-born male former weavers in workhouse. Average age of the 20 Irish-born weavers was 52.5 years.
1881: Not Included - 3 Irish-born male former weavers in workhouse. Average age of the 7 Irish-born weavers was 50.7 years.
1891: Not Included - 1 Irish-born female weaver in workhouse. Average age of the 4 Irish-born weavers was 57.5 years.
Source: ADB

Table 5.24	Irish-born male and female heads of *Irish Households* assigned to Classes 1 & 2 on the basis of occupation or employment of extra staff in 1851-71											
1841	1851	A		C	1861	A		C	1871	A		C
	Barnes Dennis George	48	Auctioneer	2	Barnes Dennis G	58	Auctioneer	2	Barnes Dennis G	68	Auctioneer	2
	Barry John	36	Hand loom weaver silk	2	Class 3		Ribbon weaver		Class 5		Mes'nger in watch factry	
	Binley Zephaniah	31	Chemist & druggist	2	Binley Zephaniah Aug	41	Farmer 36A emp 2 labs	2	Binley Zephaniah	50	Farmer 156A emp 3m 1b	2
	Breen Thomas	24	Victualler	2	Breen Thomas	39	Publican	2	Breen Thomas	51	Licenced victualler	2
	Brown Anthony	37	Watch glass maker	2	Brown Anthony	24	Surveyor of taxes	1	x			
	Chambers Samuel	59	Lieut' & barrack master	2	x				x			
	Collison John B.	42	Vicar St Michaels Cov	1	x				x			
Painter	Connor James	47	Painter, carver & gilder	2	x				x			
	Deacon Job	33	Linen Draper	2	Deacon Job	43	Linen Draper emp 2 ass	2	Deacon Job		Draper	2
	Doran Patrick	32	S weaver	2	Class 3		Ribbon weaver		Class 3		Ribbon weaver	
	Glennon Timothy P	54	Post master	2	Glennon Timothy Peter	64	Postmaster	2	x			
	Hart James	24	R Manufact' 340 hands	1	Hart James	33	R Man 100 men 580 women	1	Hart James	42	Ribbon manufacturer	1
	Henderson William	39	Level engineer/surveyor	1	x				x			
	Holland Thomas	56	General contractor	2	x				x			
Baker	Kearney William	62	Confectioner	2	x				x			
	Lamb John	60	Hand loom weaver silk	2	Class 3		Silk ribbon weaver		x			
	Little George	43	Gentleman	1	x				x			
	Smith Ralph	27	Carver & gilder	2	Class 3		Picture framer		x			
	Walker William	40	Curate Lee Brockhurst	1	x				x			
School master	Walsh James	57	Schoolmaster	2	x				x			
					De Lessert Robert	27	Journeyman dentist	1	DeLessert Rob		Dentist assistant	1
					Hennessey Thomas	22	Shoemaker emp 7m 4 b	2	Hennessey Thomas	34	Cordwainer emp 6m	2
					Hogen Michael	40	Shoemaker	2	Class 3		Shoemaker	
					Jordan Richard	58	City missionary	2	x			
					Kirkpatrick William	60	Innkeeper	2	x			
					Macker John	52	Formerly farmer	2	x			
					McVeagh Dennis J	37	Physician & surgeon	1	McVeagh Dennis	45	Physician	1
					Murray James	29	Architect	1	x			
	Class 3		Ribbon weaver h/loom		Phillips Henry	57	Ribbon weaver	2	x			
					Whitfield Wise	63	Gentleman	1	x			
	Class 3		Draper		Wynne Edward G	55	Wholesale dealer ribbons	2	Class 3		Commercial traveller	
	Class 3		Police constable		Class 3		Police constable		McDermott John	62	Inspector of police	2
									Logan Thomas	62	Accountant & pen Lt In	2
	Jelly Margaret	48	Schoolmistress	2	x				x			
Source: ADB	Townsend Mary	66	Proprietor of houses	1	Townsend Mary	77	Proprietor of Houses		x			

Table 5.25
Social classification based on occupation of Heads of *Irish Households* 1841-1861 and similar for Coventry Host Household Heads 1851

Class	1841		1851		1861		1851
	%			%		%	%
	Irish-born Heads of *Irish Households*						**Heads Cov Host Hhlds**
Male							
1	2	***1.7***	5	***2.8***	6	***2.9***	***1.9***
2	1	***.9***	15	***8.4***	13	***6.3***	***17.8***
3	93	***79.5***	100	***56.2***	93	***45.4***	***60.5***
4	11	***9.4***	15	***8.4***	19	***9.3***	***12.9***
5	10	***8.5***	43	***24.2***	74	***36.1***	***6.9***
	N=117		N=178		N=205		N=6,439
X	2		2		3		48
Female							
1	2	***14.3***	1	***3.4***	1	***2.1***	***3.7***
2			1	***3.4***			***15.6***
3	10	***71.4***	19	***65.5***	21	***43.8***	***62.4***
4	1	***7.1***	4	***13.8***	12	***25.0***	***14.6***
5	1	***7.1***	4	***13.8***	14	***29.2***	***3.6***
	N=14		N=29		N=48		N=1,080
X	4		5		7		139
	Non-Irish-born Heads of *Irish Households*						
Male							
1			1	***1.7***			
2			5	***8.6***	6	***10.7***	
3	28	***75.7***	38	***65.5***	40	***71.4***	
4	6	***16.2***	6	***10.3***	7	***12.5***	
5	3	***8.1***	8	***13.8***	3	***5.4***	
	N=37		N=58		N=56		
X			1				

Class distribution calculated with Class X removed. Barracks excluded.
1 Female British-born Head of Irish Household in 1841 Class 3.Source: ADB

Table 5.26
Collated occupations of male Irish-born married Heads of *Irish Households* in Class 3 for 1841-1861. Showing separately the occupations of male Non-Irish-born married Heads of *Irish Households* in Class 3. Also occupations of male and female Irish-born solo Heads of *Irish Households* in Class 3

	1841			1851			1861		
Male	**I-b**	**N-I-b**	**I-b S M**	**I-b**	**N-I-b**	**I-b S M**	**I-b**	**N-I-b**	**I-b S M**
Weaver ribbon/silk/plush/brace webb	57	17	4	25	12	5	42	15	2
Weaver hand loom/weaver at home				25	7	2	1		
Weaver power loom				1	1				
Coach lace weaver				1			1		
Ribbon weaver harness maker							1		
Silk thrum dealer							1		
Silk warper	1						1		
Cordwainer/Shoemaker	5	3		3	4		6	3	1
Tailoring	3	1	1	11	2		4	2	2
Hair dresser					1				
Hosier					1			1	
Furniture broker								1	
Dealer general/Hardware							2		1
Haberdasher		1							
Dealer in clothes/Broker	2			3		1			
Draper/Clothier				1			1		
Baker & flour dealer/baker	1			1			3		
Coal dealer	1				1			1	
Tallow chandler							1		
Sand seller								1	
Grocer/Grocer & tailor/ Shopkeeper							2	1	
Butcher Church of England				1					
Whitesmith/Smith		1		1	1				
Tin plate worker/Tinman & brazier					1			1	
Railway policeman					2				
Watch cap maker								1	
Watch glass maker	2								1
Watch gilder					1			1	
Watch tool maker								1	
Watchmaker	2			1			1	1	
Engraver		1							
Engine driver/Tender/engineer					1		2	1	
Bell Hanger							1		
Carpenter & joiner/Carpenter/Cooper	1			1	1				
Wood turner				1					
Carver & gilder									1
Builder	1				1				
Bricklayer					1			1	
Stone mason	1								
Plasterer								1	
Painter house	1						1	1	
Marble polisher							1		

Table 5.26 Continued

	1841			1851			1861		
Male	**I-b**	**N-I-b**	**I-b SM**	**I-b**	**N-I-b**	**I-b SM**	**I-b**	**N-I-b**	**I-b SM**
Police constable		2		1			1		
4th Dr Guards private/Army	1	1		1			2	1	
Recruiting sergeant/Barrack Sergeant/Staff sergeant	2			1			1		
Clerk recruiting office						1			
Clerk to solicitor							1	1	
Tanner x							1		
Box Maker/Basket maker/Mat maker	1	1		1			1		
Trunk maker/Trunk & umbrella maker	1					1	1		
Coach maker x	1			1			1		
Coach painter				1					
Picture framer							1		
Gas fitter/gasman				2					
Chelsea Pensioner/Assorted Pensioners	2			5			2	3	
House officer								1	
Lodging house keeper			1			1			
A player of pipes x							1		
Letter press printer	1								
Total	87	28	6	89	38	11	85	40	8
Total number of household heads	111	37	8	161	59	19	191	56	16
%	78.4	75.6	75.0	55.3	64.4	57.9	44.5	70.2	50.0

Female	**I-b SF**	**I-b SF**	**I-b SF**
Weaver/ribbon/silk	4		5		4
Weaver hand loom			1		
Weaver power loom			1		
Coach lace weaver					1
Filler			2		3
Warper	2		1		1
Winder	2		5		4
Grocer/provision dealer			1		2
Marine store dealer					1
Dealer in clothes					1
Milliner	1				
Dressmaker/seamstress			2		
Upholstress					1
Glass cutter (sold's wife)					1
Lodging house keeper	1				2
Blank but 5 lods & 1 visitor			1		
Total	10		19		21
Total number of household heads	17		34		55
%	58.0		55.8		38.1

I-b SM = Irish-born solo Male. I-b SF = Irish-born solo Female. Source: ADB

Table 5.27 St. Michael & St. John/Holy Trinity 1841										Barracks excluded Map Area 34
Map	Class HO 107/ Piece:	Book	ED	Key Street	I-born	Irishcom	I-born as % of city I-born	I-born as % of city Icom	Irish com as % of city Icom	LQ
St. Michael & St. John										
1	1152	1	1	Broadgate	2	8	*.4*	*.2*	*.9*	.4
2			2	Jordan Well/Mill Lane	6	11	*1.3*	*.7*	*1.2*	.6
3		2	3	Mill Lane/Gosford	8	16	*1.8*	*.9*	*1.8*	.9
4			4	Gosford	7	16	*1.6*	*.8*	*1.8*	.9
5		3	5	Gosford South/Jordan	5	11	*1.1*	*.6*	*1.2*	.5
6			6	Jordan Well/MP St	8	11	*1.8*	*.9*	*1.2*	.7
7		4	7	White Friar	5	10	*1.1*	*.6*	*1.1*	.5
8			8	MP St/Brick Kiln Lane	9	13	*2.0*	*1.0*	*1.4*	.7
9		5	9	London/Aldermoor						
10			10	MP St/St. Johns St	12	30	*2.7*	*1.3*	*3.3*	1.6
11			11	St. Johns St/MP St	3	10	*.7*	*.3*	*1.1*	.5
12		6	12	MP St/Earl/LP St	11	33	*2.5*	*1.2*	*3.7*	1.8
13			13	Little Park Street	3	3	*.7*	*.3*	*.3*	.2
14		7	14	LP St/Cow Lane	9	25	*2.0*	*1.0*	*2.8*	1.3
15			15	High St/Hertford St	26	47	*5.8*	*2.9*	*5.2*	2.5
16		8	16	Greyfriars Lane	32	44	*7.1*	*3.6*	*4.9*	1.8
17			17	Smithford	16	25	*3.6*	*1.8*	*2.8*	1.2
18		9	18	South Fleet/Spon	20	51	*4.5*	*2.2*	*5.7*	2.1
19			19	Spon St South	14	25	*3.1*	*1.6*	*2.8*	1.2
20		10	20	Spon/Sherbourne	6	7	*1.3*	*.7*	*.8*	.3
21			21	Butts/Thomas St	6	17	*1.3*	*.7*	*1.9*	.9
22		11	22	Thomas St/Butts	6	24	*1.3*	*.7*	*2.7*	1.0
23			23	Junction St	1	1	*.2*	*.1*	*.1*	.1
24		12	24	Hertford Tce/Spon End	2	7	*.4*	*.2*	*.8*	.3
25			25	Spon End	7	10	*1.6*	*.8*	*1.1*	.8
26			26	West Spon	13	30	*2.9*	*1.4*	*3.3*	1.5
27		13	27	Spon/Holyhead Rd	8	14	*1.8*	*.9*	*1.6*	.7
28			28	Spon/Hill St	2	2	*.4*	*.2*	*.2*	.3
29		13	29	N Hill St/N Fleet St	26	49	*5.8*	*2.9*	*5.5*	2.4
30		14	30	Charter Ho/Whitley	1	1	*.2*	*.1*	*.1*	.2
31		14	General Hospital							
32		14	Bablake Boys							
33		14	Bablake Bonds Hospital							
34		14	Barracks		(118)	(143)				
35		14	Fords Hospital							
36		14	House of Industry		10	15	*2.2*	*1.1*	*1.7*	2.2
37	1154	3	Red Lane & Caludon							

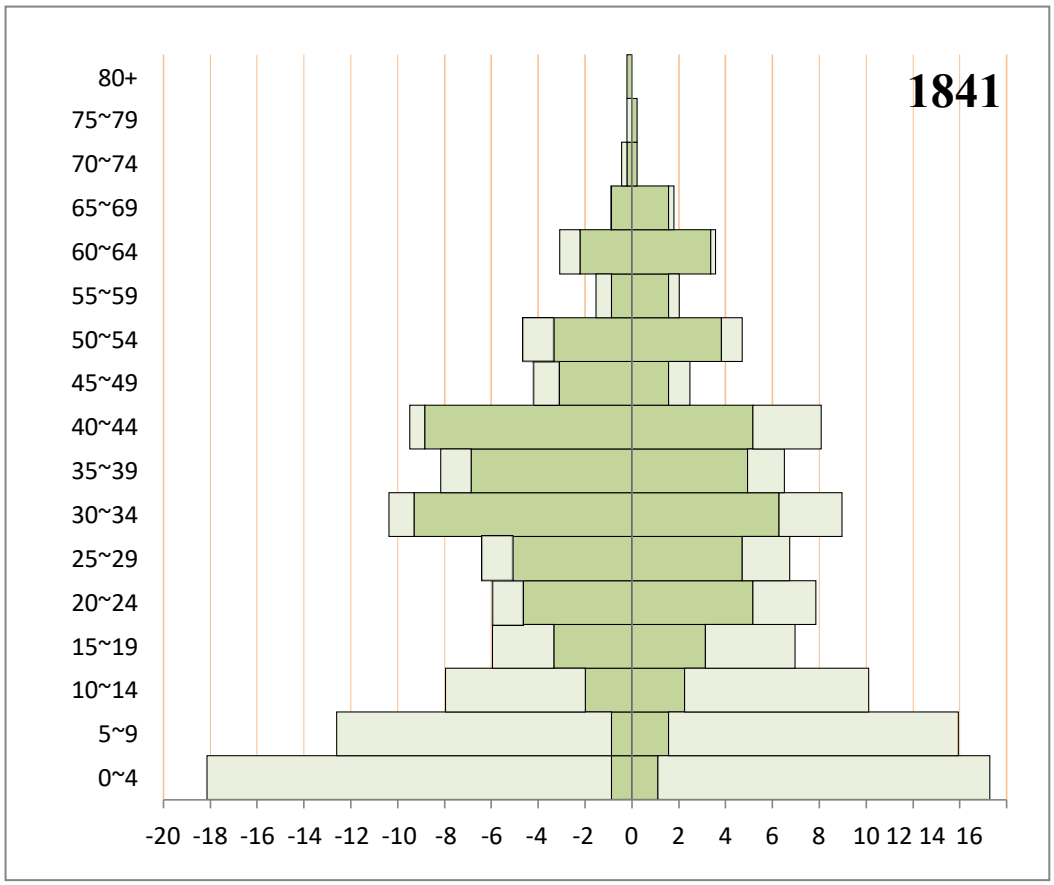
Table 5.27 Continued										
Holy Trinity										
38	1153	1	1	Broadgate/Burges	1	2	*.2*	*.1*	*.2*	.1
39			2	West Orchard	30	49	*6.7*	*3.3*	*5.5*	2.5
40		2	3	Well/Upper Well	21	32	*4.7*	*2.3*	*3.6*	1.7
41			4	Upper Well/Well	23	57	*5.1*	*2.6*	*6.4*	2.5
42		3	5	Palmer Lane	9	27	*2.0*	*1.0*	*3.0*	1.6
43			6	New Buildings	4	7	*.9*	*.4*	*.8*	.4
44			7	New St/Freeth St	6	9	*1.3*	*.7*	*1.0*	.6
45		4	8	Bishop St	6	10	*1.3*	*.7*	*1.1*	.7
46			9	Dog Lane	3	18	*.7*	*.3*	*2.0*	1.2
47			10	Bishop/Silver	4	4	*.9*	*.4*	*.4*	.4
48			11	Cook St	8	11	*1.8*	*.9*	*1.2*	1.0
49		5	12	Swan/Tower	9	28	*2.0*	*1.0*	*3.1*	1.4
50			13	Cook/Agnes Lane	1	2	*.2*	*.1*	*.2*	.2
51			14	Chauntry Place	9	10	*2.0*	*1.0*	*1.1*	.8
52			15	Mill Lane	5	11	*1.1*	*.6*	*1.2*	.7
53		6	16	Hillfields	3	4	*.7*	*.3*	*.4*	.3
54			17	High St-Hillfields	4	15	*.9*	*.4*	*1.7*	1.6
55			18	SE High St	3	4	*.7*	*.3*	*.4*	.5
56			19	Victoria	1	3	*.2*	*.1*	*.3*	.3
57			20	Harnall Lane						
58		7	21	Far Gosford	7	20	*1.6*	*.8*	*2.2*	1.1
59			22	Gosford Tce						
60			23	Whitmore Park	1	1	*.2*	*.1*	*.1*	.2
61		8	24	Drapers Field	2	3	*.4*	*.2*	*.3*	.5
62			The Gaol		4	4	*.9*	*.4*	*.4*	2.5
63	1154	9	25	Radford						
					566	1040	Figures in directly above columns do not include Barracks in their calculation			

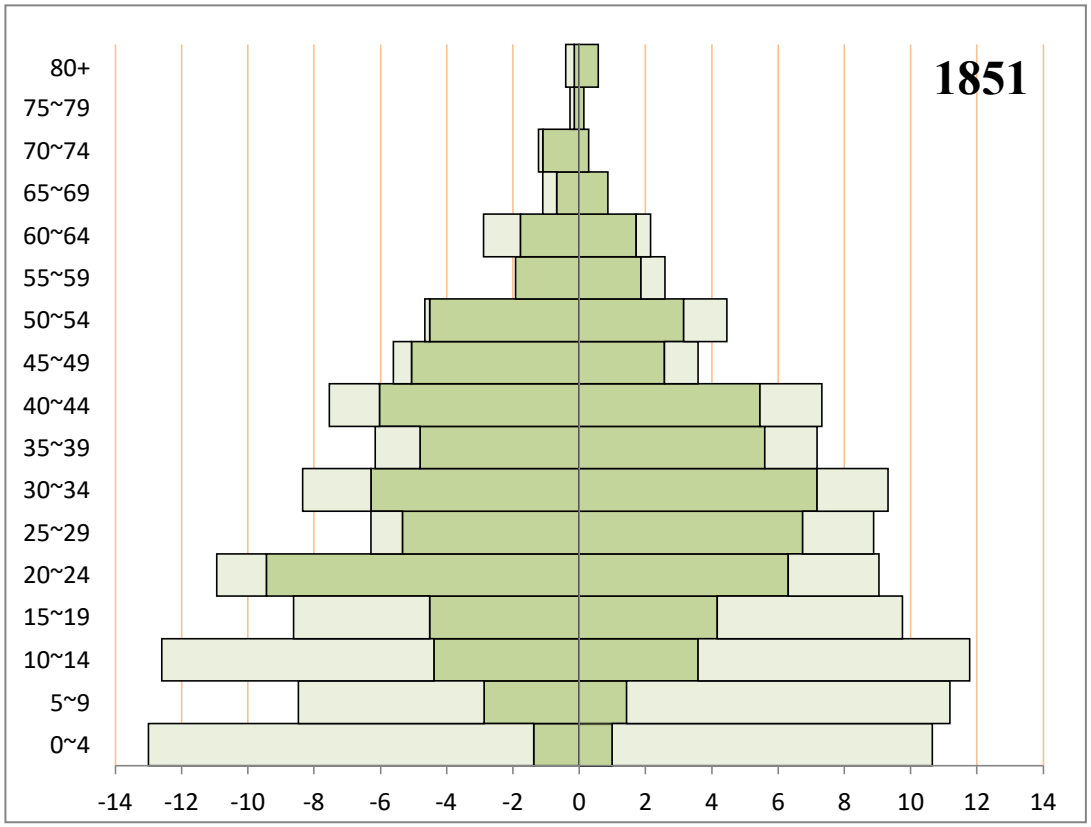
Table 5.28 St. Michael & St. John/Holy Trinity 1861									Barracks excluded Map Area 20	
Map	Class RG9/ Piece:	Book	ED	Key Street	I-born	Irish com	I-born as % of city I-born	I-born as % of city Icom	Irishcom as % of city Icom	LQ
St. Michael & St. John										
1	2201	1A	1	Broadgate	28	43	*3.9*	*1.9*	*2.9*	2.0
2			2	Jordan Well	7	11	*1.0*	*.5*	*.7*	.6
3			3	Grove	4	9	*.6*	*.3*	*.6*	.6
4			4	Gosford 1	8	10	*1.1*	*.5*	*.7*	.4
5			5	Gosford 57	14	28	*1.9*	*.9*	*1.9*	1.3
6			6	Gosford 92	27	46	*3.7*	*1.8*	*3.1*	1.9
7			7	Jordan Well	8	23	*1.1*	*.5*	*1.6*	1.3
8			8	White Friars Lane	13	24	*1.8*	*.9*	*1.6*	1.0
9	2202	1B	Whouse	Workhouse	9	9	*1.2*	*.6*	*.6*	.9
10			9	Much Park	12	26	*1.7*	*.8*	*1.8*	1.2
11			10	Much Park 26C	35	52	*4.8*	*2.4*	*3.5*	3.0
12			11	St. Johns	19	38	*2.6*	*1.3*	*2.6*	1.5
13			12	St. John/Much Park	6	16	*.8*	*.4*	*1.1*	.9
14			13	Earl	15	19	*2.1*	*1.0*	*1.3*	1.6
15			14	Little Park	3	7	*.4*	*.2*	*.5*	.3
16			15	Cow Lane	1	8	*.1*	*.1*	*.5*	.6
17			16	Greyfriars Lane	21	41	*2.9*	*1.4*	*2.8*	2.6
18	2203	1C	17	Warwick Lane	33	73	*4.6*	*2.2*	*4.9*	3.7
19			18	Warwick Rd	10	25	*1.4*	*.7*	*1.7*	1.0
20			19	Smithford	6	13	*.8*	*.4*	*.9*	1.1
				Barracks	(72)	(86)				
21			20	Fleet	12	23	*1.7*	*.8*	*1.5*	.7
22			21	Crow Lane	4	8	*.6*	*.3*	*.6*	1.0
23			22	Spon Ct 12	7	14	*1.0*	*.5*	*.9*	.6
24			23	Spon Ct 24						
25			24	Spon 88	9	26	*1.2*	*.6*	*1.8*	1.3
26	2204	1D	25	Spon 114	4	11	*.6*	*.3*	*.7*	.8
27			26	Hill	7	13	*1.0*	*.5*	*.9*	.4
28			27	Gas	8	12	*1.1*	*.5*	*.8*	.7
29			28	Fleet/W Orchard	22	39	*3.0*	*1.5*	*2.6*	3.1
30			29	Butts	4	8	*.6*	*.3*	*.5*	.5
31			30	Thomas	1	3	*.1*	*.1*	*.2*	.1
32			31	Albion	3	7	*.4*	*.2*	*.5*	.3
33			32	Hertford Place	1	5	*.1*	*.1*	*.3*	.2
34	2205	1E	33	Spon End	9	24	*1.2*	*.6*	*1.6*	.9
35			34	Craven	5	8	*.7*	*.3*	*.5*	.2
36			35	Earlsdon	2	2	*.3*	*.1*	*.1*	.1
37			36	Whitley	4	5	*.6*	*.3*	*.3*	.7
38			37	Red Lane	4	10	*.6*	*.3*	*.7*	.6

Table 5.28 Continued										
Holy Trinity										
39	2206	2A	1	Burges	8	25	*1.1*	*.5*	*1.7*	1.2
40			2	West Orchard	58	116	*8.0*	*3.9*	*7.8*	4.5
41			3	Well	43	86	*5.9*	*2.9*	*5.8*	3.2
42			4	Upper Well	25	55	*3.5*	*1.7*	*3.7*	1.5
43			5	St. Nicholas	2	3	*.3*	*.1*	*.2*	.1
44			6	Drapers Field	8	18	*1.1*	*.5*	*1.2*	.6
45			7	Bishop	13	28	*1.8*	*.9*	*1.9*	1.7
46	2207	2B	8	Cook	1	2	*.1*	*.1*	*.1*	.2
47			9	Tower/Henry	22	48	*3.0*	*1.5*	*3.2*	2.4
48			10	Agnes Lane	10	21	*1.4*	*.7*	*1.4*	1.9
49			11	Stoney Stanton	18	26	*2.5*	*1.2*	*1.8*	1.1
50			12	Palmer Lane	20	39	*2.8*	*1.4*	*2.6*	1.9
51			13	New Buildings	26	54	*3.6*	*1.8*	*3.6*	2.6
52			14	Priory Row	5	20	*.7*	*.3*	*1.4*	.7
53	2208	2C	15	Far Gosford	8	17	*1.1*	*.5*	*1.1*	.5
54			16	Paynes Lane	3	9	*.4*	*.2*	*.6*	.3
55			17	East	12	38	*1.7*	*.8*	*2.6*	1.4
56			18	Brook	7	22	*1.0*	*.5*	*1.5*	.7
57			19	King William	5	10	*.7*	*.3*	*.7*	.4
58			20	Canterbury	3	6	*.4*	*.2*	*.4*	.2
59			21	Primrose Hill	5	13	*.7*	*.3*	*.9*	.5
60			22	Adelaide	5	12	*.7*	*.3*	*.8*	.4
61			23	Bradford	4	12	*.6*	*.3*	*.8*	.5
62			24	Lower Ford	4	11	*.6*	*.3*	*.7*	.4
63			25	Swanswell	13	24	*1.8*	*.9*	*1.6*	1.0
64			26	Howard						
65			27	Harnall Lane	7	12	*1.0*	*.5*	*.8*	.6
66			28	Lower Russell	3	14	*.4*	*.2*	*.9*	.9
67			29	Radford						
					795	1566	Figures in directly above columns do not include Barracks in their calculation			

Chapter 5 Figures

Figure 5.1 Age and Sex structure of Irishcom and the proportion of Irish-born within 1841-1861




1851
80+
75~79
70~74
65~69
60~64
55~59
50~54
45~49
40~44
35~39
30~34
25~29
20~24
15~19
10~14
5~9
0~4
-14 -12 -10 -8 -6 -4 -2 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14

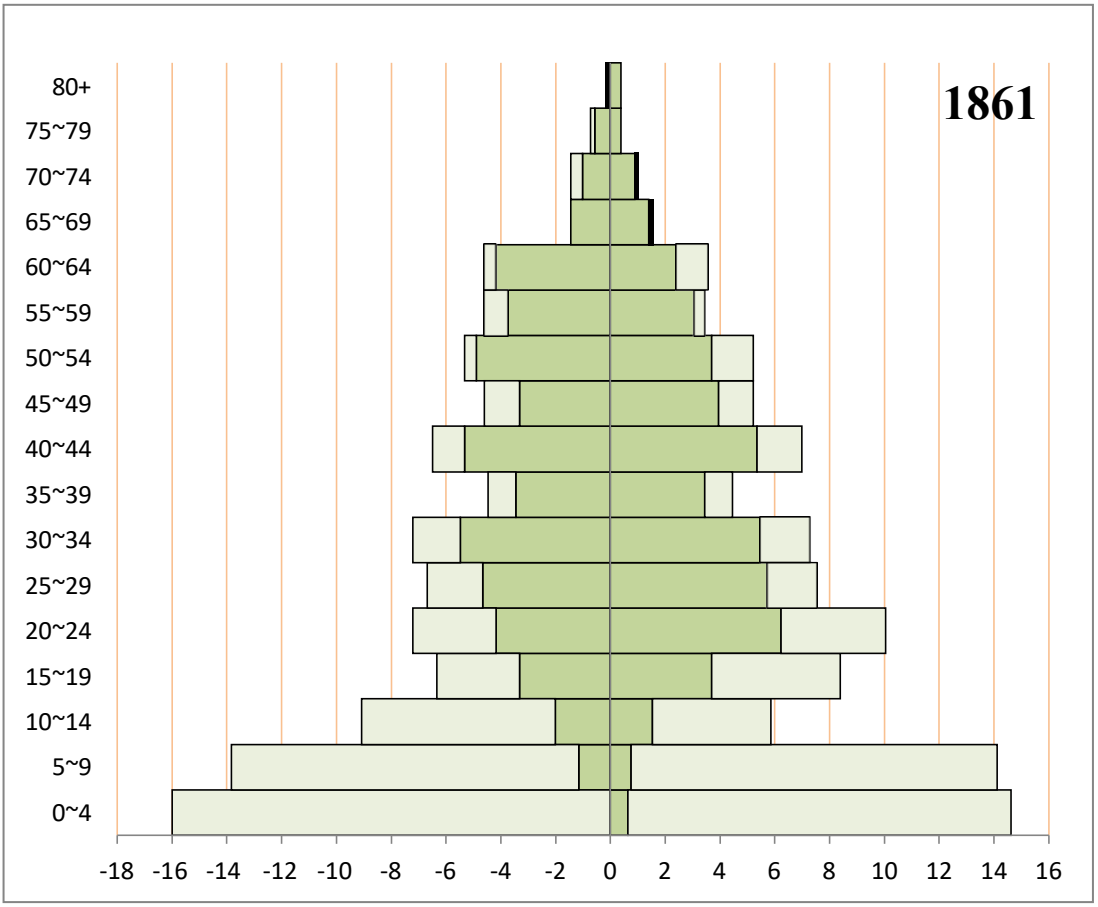
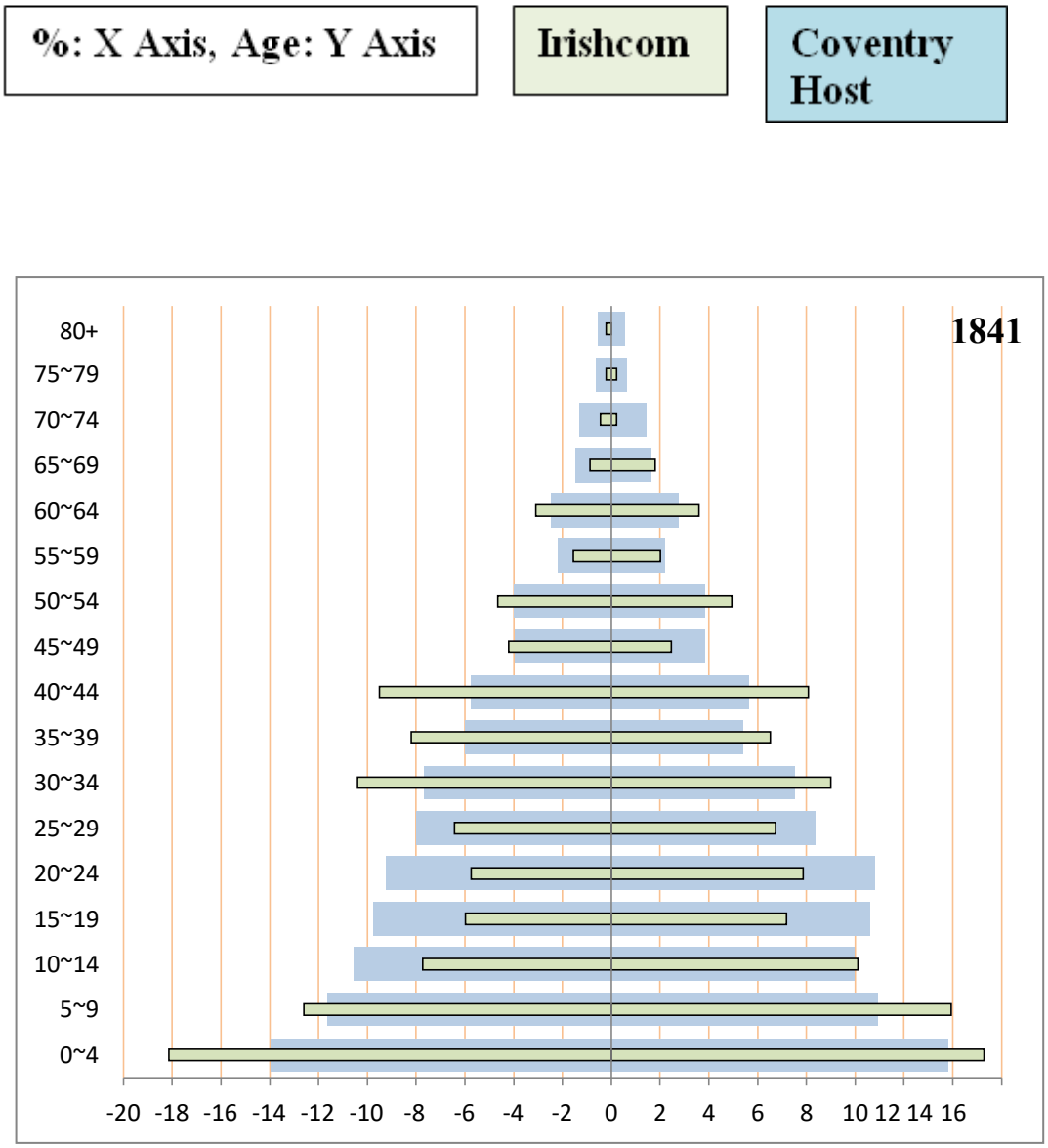
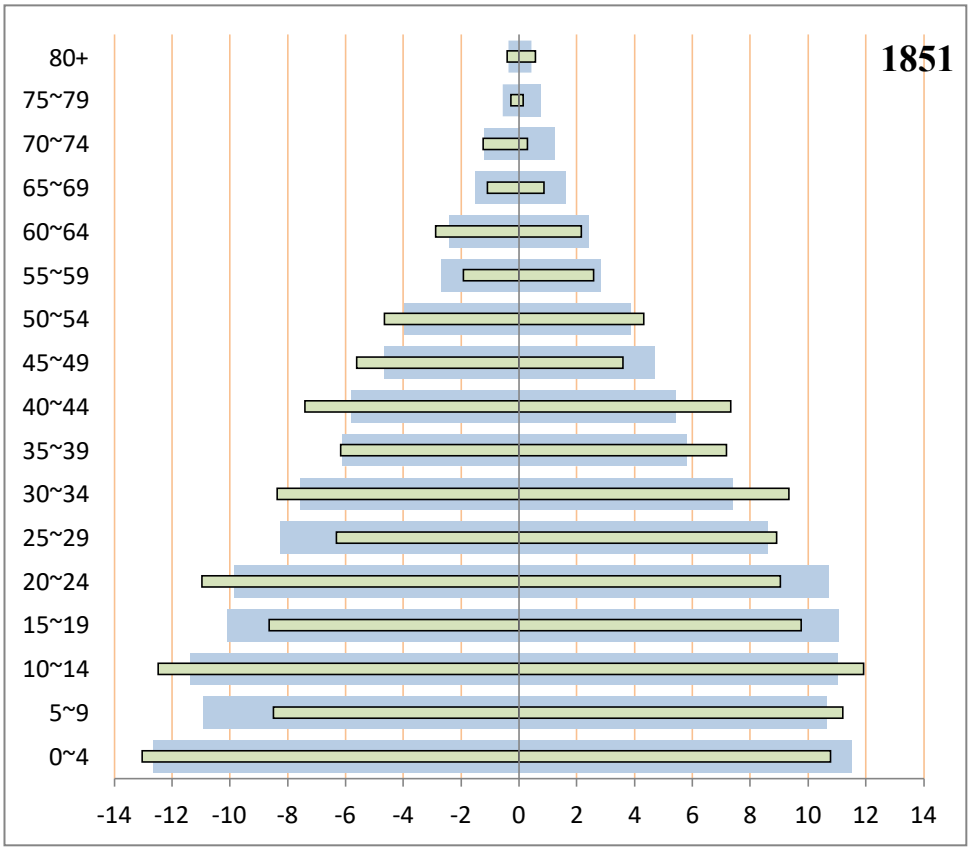
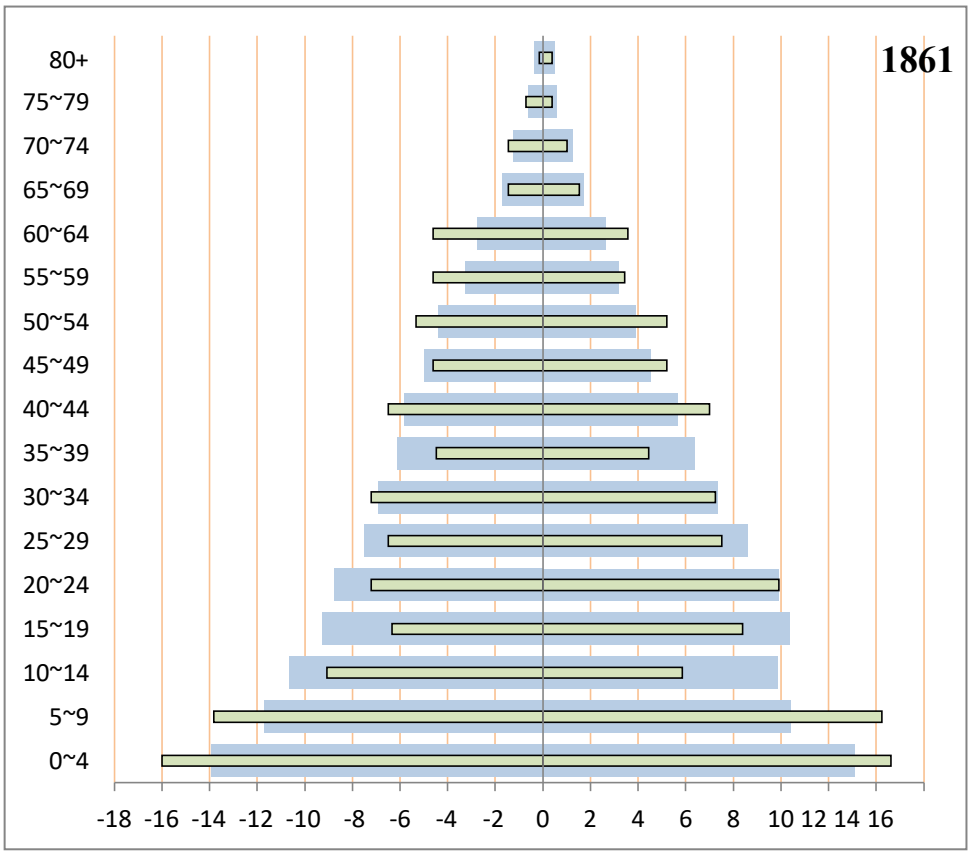

1861
80+
75~79
70~74
65~69
60~64
55~59
50~54
45~49
40~44
35~39
30~34
25~29
20~24
15~19
10~14
5~9
0~4
-18 -16 -14 -12 -10 -8 -6 -4 -2 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16

Figure 5.2 Age and Sex structure of the Coventry Host population and that of Irishcom 1841-1861




1851
80+
75~79
70~74
65~69
60~64
55~59
50~54
45~49
40~44
35~39
30~34
25~29
20~24
15~19
10~14
5~9
0~4
-14 -12 -10 -8 -6 -4 -2 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14


1861
80+
75~79
70~74
65~69
60~64
55~59
50~54
45~49
40~44
35~39
30~34
25~29
20~24
15~19
10~14
5~9
0~4
-18 -16 -14 -12 -10 -8 -6 -4 -2 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16

Chapter 6 Tables

Table 6.1
Irishcom and Irish-born numbers residing in *Irish Households* and also residing in *English Households containing Irish* in Study Area, 1871-1901

		Irish Households								*English Households containing Irish*								Total Irish in House holds	Total Irish in Reg Dist
		Irish-born				Irishcom				Irish-born				Irishcom					
Year		'71	'81	'91	'01	'71	'81	'91	'01	'71	'81	'91	'01	'71	'81	'91	'01		*Hholds & Instit-utions*
Hhold Total		402	263	211	256	1043	740	562	691	48	60	78	113	53	63	84	120		
'71	Ib	403				+				48								451	496
	Ic					1051				+				53				1104	1162
'81	Ib	263				+				60								323	368
	Ic					740				+				63				803	848
'91	Ib	210				+				78								288	347
	Ic					562				+				84				646	711
'01	Ib	256				+				113								369	417
	Ic					691				+				120				811	862

Ratio of Irish-born to Irishcom in households: 1871{1:2.4}; 1881{1:2.5}; 1891{1:2.2},1901{1:2.2}.

Source: ADB

Table 6.2
Later century transition in Coventry.
Illustrated by the Thompson household as it moved through the census years with addresses further from the city centre. The changing character of the household is indicated in the transformation of Ann Thompson's membership of an *Irish Household* to one of an *English Household containing Irish*.

Name	Rel to Head	Mar Con	Age M	Age F	Occupation	Birth place
1861: 9C3 Hill Street					**Status *Irish Household* (Head & Spouse)**	
Richard Thompson	Head	M	51		Coach lace weaver	Dublin
Ann Thompson	Wife	M		40	Coach lace weaver	Dublin
Roseanna Thompson	Dau	U		16		Dublin
Michael Thompson	Son		7			Manchester
Rose Murphy	Visitor	W		48	Coach lace weaver	Dublin
1871: 1C11 Little Park Street					**Status *Irish Household* (Married head no spouse)**	
Ann Thompson	Head	M		52	Coach lace weaver	Dublin
James Thompson	Son	U	17		Watch cap maker	Manchester
Rose Murphy	Boarder	W		60	Frm coach lace weaver	Dublin
1881: Harnall Place, Robinson Row					**Status *Irish Household* (Solo Head: Widow)**	
Anne Thompson	Head	W		64	Coach lace weaver	Dublin
Michael James Thompson	Son	M	27		Watch cap maker	Lancs
Sarah Ann Thompson	Dau in Law	M		30		Wwicks
1891: 8 Paynes Lane					**Status *English Household containing Irish* (Kin)**	
Michael J Thompson	Head	M	37		Watch Maker	Manchester
Sarah A Thompson	Wife	M		40		Stretton, Ww
Ann Thompson	Mother	W		75	Frm coach lace weaver	Dublin
Edith O Thompson	Niece			8	Scholar	Stretton, Ww

No spouse = No spouse present
The true status of a 'visitor' may questioned, as in the case of Rose Murphy who was still resident in the household ten years later. She was likely to have been Ann Thompson's mother with Roseanna her granddaughter since Roseanna appears to be a combination of her and Ann's names.
RG 9/2204.45.2 ED 28; RG10/3175.130.14 ED10; RG11/3074.47.5 ED22; RG12/2455.74.34 ED19

Table 6.4
Marital status of solo Lodgers, Kin, and Visitors and whether they were Irishcom

Table 6.3
Percentage of *Irish Households* and Coventry Households in each Household unit size according to the frequency of Heads Family sizes for 1881

Hhold Unit Size	Heads Family Size																									
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10		11		12		13	14
	IH	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	*IH*	CH	CH		CH		CH	CH
	% Frequency																									
1	***50.0***	*37.0*																								
2	***22.7***	*28.3*	***57.8***	*59.3*																						
3	***13.6***	*16.6*	***17.8***	*22.2*	***60.7***	*68.5*																				
4	***4.5***	*9.4*	***15.6***	*10.0*	***17.9***	*18.7*	***63.0***	*69.4*																		
5		*4.6*	***6.7***	*4.3*	***17.9***	*7.5*	***14.8***	*18.9*	***64.7***	*71.0*																
6		*1.8*	***2.2***	*1.9*		*2.6*	***18.5***	*6.5*	***23.5***	*17.9*	***62.5***	*75.2*														
7		*1.1*		*1.1*		*1.4*		*2.5*	***11.8***	*6.5*	***12.5***	*14.9*	***72.7***	*77.5*												
8		*.6*		*.5*		*.7*		*1.6*		*2.6*	***6.2***	*5.8*	***9.0***	*13.3*	***71.4***	*83.0*										
9		*.3*		*.3*		*.2*	***3.7***	*.4*		*1.0*	***12.5***	*1.7*	***9.0***	*5.8*	***28.5***	*11.8*	***100.0***	*81.8*								
10		*.1*		*.1*	***3.6***	*.1*		*.3*		*.5*	***6.2***	*1.5*	***9.0***	*1.4*		*2.4*		*10.9*	***100.0***	*83.6*						
11	***4.5***							*.1*		*.2*		*.3*		*.5*		*1.2*		*4.3*		*9.7*	*90.0*					
12				*.05*				*.1*						*.1*		*.9*		*2.1*		*4.3*	*4.0*		*90.9*			
13								*.1*		*.1*		*.2*		*.7*		*.3*				*1.0*	*4.0*		*9.0*		*50.0*	
14	***4.5***			*.09*						*.1*						*.3*				*1.0*	*2.0*					*100.0*
15										*.1*		*.2*						*.5*								
16				*.05*										*.3*											*50.0*	
17																										
18																										
19		*.1*																								
20																										
21																										
24		*.1*																								
35																										
46				*.05*																						
Irish Hhlds	**22**		**45**		**28**		**27**		**17**		**16**		**11**		**7**		**4**		**1**							
Cov Hhlds		1,172		2,146		1,627		1,456		1,149		879		561		330		182		92		50		11		2		1

No *Irish Hhlds:* 178, No Cov Hlds: 9658. The latter includes 54 *English Households containing Irish* Source: ADB

or Irish-born in *Irish Households* and *English Households containing Irish* 1871-1901								
	Irish Households				***English Households containing Irish***			
Year	**'71**	**'81**	**'91**	**'01**	**'71**	**'81**	**'91**	**'01**
Lodgers								
Irish-born unmarried male under 18	1				1		1	1
Irish-born unmarried male 18 or over	16	11	9	6	6	13	17	31
Irish-born male married – no wife	4	2	2	1	1	2	2	1
Irish-born widower		4	2		2	2	2	4
Irish-born unmarried female under 18	1				1			
Irish-born unmarried female 18 or over	3	1		3	4	2	7	4
Irish-born female married – no husband			1			1	1	1
Irish-born widow	3	2		1	3	5	2	3
'Irishcom' unmarried male 18 or over						1		2
'Irishcom' male married						1		
'Irishcom' unmarried female 18 or over								1
Irish-born male marital status unknown	1							
Irish-born female marital status unk						1		
Kin								
Irish-born unmarried male under 18							1	
Irish-born unmarried male 18 or over	3		1	5				1
Irish-born male married – no wife				1				
Irish-born widower	2				1	4	1	2
Irish-born unmarried female under 18	3		2		2		1	1
Irish-born unmarried female 18 or over	5		2	2		1	2	
Irish-born female married – no husband	1	3		1	1	1	3	
Irish-born widow	11	5	2	4	4	2	9	6
'Irishcom' unmarried male under 18	4	4	4	1				
'Irishcom' unmarried male 18 or over		2		1				
'Irishcom' male married								1
'Irishcom' unmarried female under 18	5	11	5	1				
'Irishcom' unmarried female 18 or over		2	1	2				
Irish-born male marital status unknown								

Kin does not include married or widowed children of head.
The number of visitors was almot negligible: *Irish Households*: 1871=2, 1881= 4, 1891= 6, 1901=1. *English Households containing Irish*: 1871=2, 1881=3, 1891=1, 1901=2. Source: ADB

Table 6.5
Details of Heads of *English Households containing Irish* with size of household, number of Irish co-residing and their relationship to the Head 1881

G	M	A	*	Occupation	Observation on Irish	R	H	Ic	I
M	M	46	1	Watch finisher	FATHER of 10 year old son b. Newbridge	C	4	1	1
F	M	48	2	Pensioners wife	MOTHER of 23 year old daughter a ribbon blocker b. Temple Moor	C	7	1	1
M	M	44	3	Pensioner	FATHER of 11 year old daughter born Cork County	C	7	1	1
F	W	35	4	Silk winder	MOTHER of 14 year errand boy born in Killarney	C	6	1	1
M	M	62	5	Hair dresser	FATHER of 18 y & 15 y Irish-born daughs	C	4	2	2
M	M	41	6	General labourer	FATHER of 2 Irish daus aged 6 and 4 years	C	6	2	2
M	M	49	7	Solicitor	FATHER of 4 year old daug born in Dublin	C	7	1	1
M	M	52	8	Boot & shoe maker	FATHER of adopted son an Irish-born 19 years watch maker	C	3	1	1
M	M	57	9	Engiine driver gas works	FATHER (Step?) of 31 year Mayo watch maker finisher	C	6	1	1
M	M	45	10	Gen Lab (Pens)	FATHER of 2 sons 17 and 14 Irish-born	C	6	2	2
M	M	45	11	Coachman or servant	FATHER of 11 year old son born in Care, Tipperary	C	7	1	1
F	M	65		Seamstress	Lodger a 67 year old unmarried seamstress from Mayo	L	2	1	1
F	W	53		Charwoman	Lodger was Bridget Killin a 40 year old hawker	L	7	1	1
M	M	24		Store k'per bicy' works	Dublin born, 51 year old silk weaving lodger, 2 other lodgers	L	7	1	1
F	W	63		Housekeeper	Unmarried 20 year old coach painter from Belfast	L	4	1	1
F	W	36		Provision dealer	26 year old 2nd Class Office Inland Excise Officer	L	4	1	1
M	M	71		Ribbon weaver	Margaret Fogarty, 32 year old seamstress b. Leitrim	L	3	1	1
M	M	60		Iron moulder	Mary Kelly 85 year old widow from Dublin	L	4	1	1
F	W	55		Licensed victualler	37 year old married engine fitter	L	8	1	1
F	W	66		Unstated (daughter: school mistress)	Charles J. Coltram, 25 years old Newspaper Editor b. Dublin	L	5	1	1
M	M	29		Soldier	50 year old widow Roscommon charwoman, 1 other lodger	L	4	1	1
M	W	37		Gun maker	2 Irish-born lodgers: a gun maker age 42 and a gen lab age 19	L	24	2	2
M	M	37		Shoeing smith	Irish silk winder mother 23 and her Coventry born dau 9 years	L	11	2	1
M	M	54		Publican & farmer	Daniel Brannan a 56 year old Dublin born farm labourer	L	8	1	1
F	W	65		Tailoress	Lodger: Widow Bridget Sherden a 70 years marine stores gatherer	L	2	1	1
M	M	58		Ribbon weaver	Irish 18y grocers porter. His sibling also a lodger b. Woolwich	L	6	1	1
M	M	72		Unstated (Son: groom)	A 24 year old gardener from Clonard Wexford. 2 other lodgers	L	7	1	1
M	W	54		Licensed victualler	65 year old boarder who was an Irish-born general labourer	L	5	1	1

Table 6.5 Continued

G	M	A	Occupation	Observation on Irish	R	H	Ic	I
M	M	35	Iron fitter	A 20 year old iron turner from Ireland	L	8	1	1
F	W	79	Dressmaker	A 64 year old silk filler widow born in Cork Harbour	L	3	1	1

F	M	54	Licen' victuallers wife	Lodgers both drapers & cloth dealers: Mayo 40 years, Down 47years	L	8	2	2
M	M	36	Butcher	Boarder was a 26 year old Irish-born bicycle maker (fitter)	L	10	1	1
M	M	36	Labourer general	2 lodgers: a 30 year Newry farm lab and a 28 year Cork shoemaker	L	46	2	2
M	M	54	Farmer	Indoor servant was a 17 old year female b. Newbridge	S	5	1	1
F	W	69	Income from bank shares	Jane Bradshaw a 50 year old nurse b. Dublin	S	2	1	1
F	M	53	Hotel keeper	A 25 year old dom servant cook	S	3	1	1
M	M	50	Magistrate, Deputy Lieutenant	30 year old Dublin born butler to Edward Petre	S	15	1	1
M	U	56	Roman Catholic priest	Norah Smyth a 22 year old servant from Elphin Roscommon	S	6	1	1
F	M	51	Unstated (son: printer)	Her father was a former farm lab, wdr 82 years b. Dublin (Flip)	K	5	1	1
M	M	41	Watch finisher	Kin a widowed sister- in-law silk weaver	K	3	1	1
M	U	26	Master Tailor (E 10M, 2W, 1B)	Unmarried 31 year old sister from Cork County	K	5	1	1
M	M	37	Umbrella maker	Widowed 60 y laundress mother-in-law from Roscommon	K	6	1	1
M	M	49	Watch finisher	His father 80 year widr watch finisher from Down (Flip)	K	8	1	1
M	M	45	Licensed victualler	Niece 44 years b. Congleton and her 44 year Dublin painter husband	K	4	2	1
M	M	30	Watchmaker finisher	His father- in-law an 80 year old Irish-born general labourer	K	6	1	1
M	M	60	Tailor	Head & a lodger wdr 87year tailor, both called Chattaway. Father?	K	5	1	1
M	M	54	Weaver	His mother a 68 y Irish-born winder (Flip)	K	4	1	1
M	M	62	Farmer 58 Acres (E 1M, 1B)	55 year old Dublin born widower farm servant	E	10	1	1
M	M	21	Barber & tobacconist	William Thomas: A 38 year old Irish-born baker's assistant	E	4	1	1
M	M	55	School master	Pupil teacher: 15 y Agnes Elizabeth Long	P	5	1	1
F	W	52	Laundress	A 67 year old dom servant from Kildare	V	4	1	1
F	W	36	Milliner	Visitor 30 year, an Irish-born commercial traveller & his Welsh 28 year wife	V	5	2	1
M	M	44	Watch finisher	Robert P Bell a 28 y Irish-born traveller	V	9	1	1

Column Legend: G = Gender, M = Marital condition, A = Age, * Corresponding with Table 6.6, H = Size of household, Ic = Irishcom in household, I = Irish-born in household.
Column R shows Irishcom relationship to Head: C =Child (may be adult) of Head, E = Employee, K =Kin, L = Lodger, P = Pupil Teacher, V = Visitor, S = Servant. A Flip indicates that the household head in the census is the son rather than the father. Source: ADB

Table 6.6
An adjunct Table to Table 6.5. The Irish-born children of heads of *English Households containing Irish* 1861

*	Head	H	I-b	Name	A M	A F	Occupation	B'place
1	Watch Finisher	4	1	Ernest W. Jones	10			Newbridge

2	Pensioners wife	7	1	Martha Chever		19		Temple Moor
3	Pensioner	7	1	Ellen Gibbs		11		Co Cork
4	Silk winder	6	1	James T. Moore	14		Errand boy	Killarney
5	Hairdresser	4	2	Matilda Needle		18		Ireland
				Emily Needle		15		Ireland
6	General labourer	6	2	Elizabeth Sims		6	Scholar	Ireland
				Susannah Sims		4	Scholar	Ireland
7	Solicitor	7	1	Kathleen M. Elsworthy		4		Dublin
8	Boot & Shoe maker (b. Northamptonshire)	3	1	William Middleton Adopted son	19		Watch maker	Ireland
9	Engine driver gas works	6	1	John Beale Hunt	31		Watch maker finisher	Westport Mayo
10	Gen Lab (Pensioner)	6	2	WilliamG.Wood	17			Ireland
				John Wood	14			Ireland
11	Coachman or servant	7	1	William Widlake	11		Scholar	Care Tipperary

Table 6.7 Age and Sex structure of Irishcom and also Coventry Host Population expressed in percentage form 1871-1901

	Irishcom										*Coventry Host*							
	%										%							
	Male					*Female*					*Male*				*Female*			
Age	*'71*	*'71**	*'81*	*'91*	*'01*	*'71*	*'71**	*'81*	*'91*	*'01*	*1871 City*	*1881*	*1891*	*1901*	*1871 City*	*1881*	*1891*	*1901*
80+	1.5	1.6	1.5	0.6	1.2	.3	.3	1.4	1.1	1.9	.5	.5	.4	.4	.5	.5	.6	.6
75-79	.4	.4	.8	1.3	1.0	.7	.7	.5	2.0	.5	.8	.8	.8	.7	.8	.9	.9	1.0
70-74	3.0	3.1	4.6	2.2	2.4	2.1	2.2	2.7	2.3	2.1	1.6	1.7	1.2	1.3	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6
65-69	2.9	2.9	3.3	3.2	2.4	2.6	2.5	3.4	4.2	3.0	2.3	2.1	2.0	1.7	2.3	2.2	2.5	2.0
60-64	5.5	5.4	3.5	6.0	3.3	3.6	3.5	5.3	5.9	4.2	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.5	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.7
55-59	2.7	2.7	4.3	4.4	3.6	4.0	4.0	5.0	4.8	3.0	3.7	3.2	3.0	2.7	3.4	3.5	3.3	2.9
50-54	5.9	5.8	6.8	7.6	3.1	5.3	5.4	5.9	4.8	2.6	4.6	4.0	3.9	3.5	4.4	4.3	4.2	3.7
45-49	4.9	4.8	4.6	4.1	3.1	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	3.8	4.7	4.6	4.0	4.7	5.2	4.9	4.2	4.6
40-44	8.4	8.5	6.1	4.1	6.7	7.4	7.2	5.5	6.2	5.4	5.6	5.4	4.9	5.4	5.4	5.6	5.1	5.8
35-39	4.2	4.3	4.3	3.2	8.6	6.1	6.0	4.8	4.8	7.7	5.7	5.3	6.3	6.6	6.3	5.5	6.0	6.3
30-34	7.2	7.4	4.6	7.9	7.6	6.6	6.5	5.7	5.6	6.6	6.8	6.3	7.1	7.5	6.8	6.3	7.1	7.5
25-29	4.2	4.1	5.1	8.8	9.7	4.8	4.9	5.0	6.8	11.0	6.4	7.6	8.2	9.6	7.6	7.9	8.5	9.5
20-24	3.8	3.7	9.9	10.4	7.4	6.1	5.9	10.3	8.5	8.7	7.6	8.9	10.1	9.5	8.8	9.6	9.6	10.3
15-19	8.5	8.5	11.4	6.9	7.4	9.5	9.6	9.4	11.5	9.4	9.9	10.0	10.8	10.0	10.5	10.0	10.6	10.1
10-14	12.7	12.6	11.4	13.2	9.0	12.8	13.1	11.6	5.9	10.3	11.2	10.2	10.8	10.3	10.6	10.2	10.9	9.6
5-9	12.5	12.8	8.6	6.3	10.7	11.5	11.4	11.0	12.1	9.1	12.2	12.6	11.9	11.1	10.7	11.4	11.0	10.3
0-4	11.8	11.7	9.1	9.8	13.1	11.7	11.7	7.3	8.1	10.8	13.2	13.8	12.0	12.7	12.0	12.9	11.3	11.7
Total	527	517	395	317	421	609	597	438	355	427	17,073	20,834	25,299	33,471	19,286	23,287	26,878	35,846

* The census abstracts for 1871 only provide a full range age/sex breakdown for the 'City' of Coventry, thereby excluding four 'without' Enumeration Districts, that are included within the areal aggregate when Coventry is referred to throughout this study. The four EDS contained 22 Irishcom, which have been removed from the appropriate age rows of 1871 Irishcom columns marked * to provide a comparable percentage of Irishcom to the Host population.
Barracks excluded from all columns and Irishcom from Coventry Host population. Irishcom figures as per normal include Irish-born
Coventry Host population in 1881, 1891 as represented by RD 392 and equivalent area in 1901.
Source: ADB; Census 1871 Vol III p. 294; Census 1881 Vol III p. 239, Census 1891 Vol III p. 227; County of Warwick 1901 pp. 40, 42.

Table 6.8
Marital condition by age of Irishcom 1871-1901 and from the Census abstracts for Coventry the condition of the Host population 1871-1901.

Age	Irishcom												Coventry Host											
	1871			1881			1891			1901			1871			1881			1891			1901		
	%			%			%			%			%			%			%			%		
	U	M	W	U	M	W	U	M	W	U	M	W	U	M	W	U	M	W	U	M	W	U	M	W
Male																								
75+	*1.1*	*1.9*	*21.7*		*2.0*	*28.6*	*2.1*	*.9*	*15.0*		*2.6*	*31.3*	*.2*	*1.5*	*16.7*	*1.3*	*8.3*	*47.2*	*.8*	*7.1*	*43.4*	*.2*	*1.1*	*18.6*
65-	*3.3*	*9.6*	*34.8*	*1.8*	*17.0*	*14.3*	*1.1*	*9.1*	*30.0*		*8.9*	*37.5*	*1.1*	*6.5*	*29.7*							*.7*	*4.9*	*27.6*
55-	*5.5*	*16.3*	*13.0*	*3.6*	*15.0*	*28.6*	*3.2*	*20.9*	*35.0*	*.9*	*15.3*	*25.0*	*2.2*	*14.2*	*20.7*	*1.3*	*13.2*	*23.2*	*1.2*	*12.1*	*24.8*	*1.2*	*10.9*	*20.5*
45-	*2.2*	*25.0*	*13.0*	*1.8*	*25.9*	*28.6*	*4.3*	*27.3*	*15.0*	*2.7*	*14.7*		*2.9*	*20.5*	*16.8*	*2.6*	*19.4*	*15.7*	*2.5*	*18.0*	*16.2*	*2.5*	*18.3*	*16.3*
35-	*9.9*	*26.0*	*13.0*	*4.5*	*24.5*		*4.3*	*16.4*	*5.0*	*16.4*	*28.7*	*6.3*	*5.1*	*25.6*	*10.4*	*4.7*	*24.7*	*8.8*	*4.8*	*25.7*	*10.8*	*5.1*	*26.7*	*11.2*
25-	*20.9*	*19.7*		*18.8*	*11.6*		*31.9*	*20.9*		*28.2*	*26.8*		*14.2*	*25.9*	*4.8*	*14.7*	*27.8*	*4.6*	*16.4*	*29.8*	*4.4*	*19.0*	*32.1*	*5.3*
20-	*17.6*	*1.4*	*4.3*	*30.4*	*3.4*		*29.8*	*4.6*		*23.6*	*3.2*		*26.3*	*5.6*	*.9*	*29.6*	*6.4*	*.4*	*30.2*	*7.2*	*.5*	*30.1*	*6.0*	*.6*
15-	*39.6*			*39.3*	*.7*		*23.4*			*28.2*			*48.1*	*.2*		*45.7*	*.2*		*44.0*	*.1*		*41.3*	*.1*	
Total 15 &>	91	208	23	112	147	21	94	110	20	110	157	16	3741	7142	666	4523	7959	714	6166	9465	896	8011	12908	1063
	N=322			N=280			N=224			N=283			N=11,549			N=13,196			N=16,527			N=21,982		
Female																								
75+		*.9*	*7.3*	*.9*	*.7*	*14.3*	*1.0*		*20.8*			*29.4*	*.2*	*.7*	*13.2*	*1.6*	*5.4*	*39.4*	*2.0*	*5.3*	*43.6*	*.4*	*.7*	*17.4*
65-	*1.9*	*5.6*	*27.3*	*1.7*	*8.0*	*28.6*	*1.0*	*9.6*	*22.9*	*1.0*	*6.3*	*32.4*	*1.0*	*4.7*	*27.2*							*1.3*	*3.6*	*27.7*
55-	*.9*	*13.0*	*30.9*	*1.7*	*20.7*	*28.6*	*3.0*	*15.7*	*35.4*	*1.9*	*12.0*	*29.4*	*2.2*	*11.9*	*22.8*	*2.2*	*12.1*	*23.1*	*2.5*	*10.5*	*23.7*	*2.1*	*9.4*	*23.7*
45-	*6.5*	*21.5*	*18.2*	*4.3*	*24.0*	*19.0*	*7.1*	*20.0*	*12.5*	*3.9*	*13.2*	*5.9*	*3.7*	*20.5*	*19.1*	*4.2*	*19.3*	*20.3*	*3.8*	*17.6*	*17.5*	*3.5*	*17.1*	*16.7*
35-	*8.4*	*30.1*	*14.6*	*6.1*	*22.7*	*9.5*	*9.1*	*23.5*	*6.3*	*5.8*	*30.2*	*2.9*	*7.4*	*26.0*	*12.0*	*6.8*	*24.8*	*11.4*	*6.2*	*24.9*	*10.4*	*7.0*	*26.1*	*10.3*
25-	*18.7*	*22.2*	*1.8*	*20.9*	*15.3*		*13.1*	*27.0*		*25.0*	*30.8*		*18.2*	*27.6*	*5.2*	*16.1*	*28.7*	*5.1*	*17.6*	*31.4*	*4.4*	*17.8*	*33.6*	*3.9*
20-	*18.7*	*6.5*		*28.7*	*8.0*		*24.2*	*4.4*	*2.1*	*24.0*	*7.6*		*24.7*	*8.0*	*.5*	*27.4*	*9.1*	*.6*	*25.2*	*9.7*	*.4*	*27.8*	*9.1*	*.4*
15-	*44.9*	*.5*		*35.7*			*41.4*			*38.5*			*42.6*	*.6*		*41.7*	*.5*		*42.6*	*.6*	*.1*	*40.3*	*.4*	
Total 15 &>	107	216	55	115	150	42	99	115	48	104	159	34	4879	7253	1472	5471	8083	1695	6531	9444	2026	8835	13124	2474
	N=378			N=307			N=262			N=297			N=13,604			N=15,249			N=18,001			N=24,435		

Barracks excluded in all columns. Irishcom excluded from host population. Census Abstracts for 1871 only supply totals for those aged 15 years and upwards and this Table presentation is based on that provision. The 1881 and 1891 abstracts each supply only one figure per marital condition for all those age 65 or above.
Coventry Host population before adjustment represented in 1871 by RD 393, in 1881 and 1891 by RD 392. In 1901 Irishcom and Coventry Host population as represented by Coventry City (C.B). Source ADB; Census 1871Vol III p. 298; Census 1881 Vol 3 p. 238; Census 1891 Vol III p. 239; Census 1901, County of Warwick p. 47

Table 6.9 Marital condition and age of *Irish Household* Heads 1871-1901 and Marital condition and age of Coventry Host Household Heads 1881

Age	Heads of *Irish Households*												Heads of Coventry Host Households		
	1871			1881			1891			1901			1881		
	%			%			%			%			%		
	U	M	W	U	M	W	U	M	W	U	M	W	U	M	W
Male															
75+		*1.6*	*8.3*		*2.4*		*33.33*	*1.0*	*9.1*		*2.1*		*2.2*	*1.3*	*15.6*
65-	*50.0*	*9.8*	*25.0*		*18.3*	*20.0*		*9.1*	*36.4*		*9.0*	*100.0*	*9.4*	*7.0*	*25.9*
55-	*25.0*	*16.6*	*16.7*		*15.9*	*40.0*	*33.33*	*22.2*	*27.3*		*14.6*		*10.6*	*13.7*	*27.3*
45-		*25.4*	*25.0*	*100.0*	*29.4*	*40.0*		*29.3*	*27.3*	*50.0*	*13.9*		*14.4*	*19.9*	*17.3*
35-	*25.0*	*27.5*	*25.0*		*23.8*			*16.2*		*50.0*	*29.2*		*20.6*	*24.9*	*11.1*
25-		*17.6*			*7.9*		*33.33*	*17.2*			*27.8*		*25.0*	*27.3*	*2.7*
20-		*1.6*			*1.6*			*5.1*			*3.5*		*15.6*	*5.7*	*.2*
15-					*0.8*								*2.2*	*.1*	
Total	4	193	12	1	126	5	3	99	11	2	144	5	180	7,452	405
Female															
75+		*16.7*	*3.1*			*13.8*			*20.6*			*25.0*	*4.8*		*10.1*
65-	*14.3*				*.7*	*24.1*			*26.5*			*43.8*	*8.1*	*4.7*	*21.2*
55-	*14.3*	*16.7*	*18.8*	*40.0*	*2.2*	*27.6*			*38.2*			*31.3*	*20.7*	*15.8*	*25.3*
45-	*28.6*	*33.3*	*25.0*		*2.9*	*20.7*			*8.8*				*22.6*	*27.4*	*25.1*
35-	*14.3*	*16.7*	*28.1*	*40.0*	*.7*	*10.3*		*100.0*	*5.9*		*62.5*		*19.6*	*26.5*	*13.9*
25-	*28.6*	*16.7*	*21.9*	*20.0*	*.7*		*100.*	*0*			*25.0*		*16.7*	*21.4*	*4.1*
20-			*3.1*		*.7*						*12.5*		*5.9*	*4.2*	*.3*
15-													*1.5*		
Total	7	6	32	5	11	29	1	1	34		8	16	270	215	1,134
Total	11	224	44	6	138	34	4	100	45	2	152	21	450	7,667	1,539
	N=254			N=178			N=149			N=175			N=9,656		

Barracks and Institutions excluded in all columns. Heads of *Irish Households* excluded from host population. Not included above in Coventry Host households: 12 households with no evidence of head. Also not included a Coventry Host household where a 13 year old 'son' was listed first and who was in the absence of evidence of parents treated as its head

Source: ADB

Table 6.10 Social classification based on occupation of Irish-born and Irishcom 1871-1901																
Class	Irish-born								Irishcom							
	1871		1881		1891		1901		1871		1881		1891		1901	
		%		%		%		%		%		%		%		%
Male																
1	3	*1.4*	3	*1.9*	7	*5.3*	11	*6.1*	5	*1.4*	5	*1.7*	12	*4.7*	13	*4.7*
2	11	*5.2*	16	*10.0*	10	*7.6*	17	*9.5*	18	*5.2*	21	*7.3*	16	*6.9*	27	*9.8*
3	91	*42.9*	58	*36.3*	50	*37.2*	59	*33.0*	170	*49.3*	142	*49.7*	99	*42.7*	102	*37.0*
4	37	*17.5*	38	*23.8*	28	*21.4*	58	*32.4*	66	*19.1*	62	*21.7*	57	*24.6*	87	*31.5*
5	70	*44.0*	45	*28.1*	36	*27.5*	34	*19.0*	86	*24.9*	56	*19.6*	49	*21.1*	47	*17.0*
		N=212		N=162		N=131		N=179		N=345		N=286		N=232		N=276
X	14	*(6.2)*	13	*(7.5)*	22	*(14.3)*	30	*(14.4)*	182	*(34.5)*	109	*(27.6)*	84	*(26.6)*	145	*(34.4)*
Female																
1			4	*3.6*	9	*11.8*	3	*3.7*			4	*1.9*	10	*7.3*	3	*2.3*
2	5	*3.4*	9	*8.0*	11	*14.5*	19	*23.5*	5	*1.8*	16	*7.8*	13	*9.5*	23	*18.0*
3	62	*42.2*	45	*40.2*	30	*39.5*	28	*34.6*	172	*61.4*	112	*54.1*	80	*58.4*	49	*38.3*
4	48	*32.7*	34	*30.4*	6	*7.9*	20	*24.7*	65	*23.2*	51	*24.6*	14	*10.2*	39	*30.2*
5	32	*21.8*	20	*17.9*	20	*26.3*	11	*13.6*	38	*13.6*	24	*11.6*	20	*14.6*	14	*10.9*
		N=147		N=112		N=76		N=81		N=280		N=207		N=137		N=128
X	107	*(41.1)*	66	*(37.1)*	85	*(52.9)*	116	*(58.9)*	329	*(54.0)*	231	*(52.9)*	219	*(61.5)*	299	*(70.0)*
Barracks excluded														Source: ADB		

Table 6.11 Social classification based on occupation of *Irish Household* Heads 1871-1901 and similar for Coventry Host Household Heads 1881 according to marital condition

Class	1871				1881				1891				1901				1881		
		%				%				%				%			%		
	U	M		W	U	M		W	U	M		W	U	M		W	U	M	W
	Irish-born Heads of *Irish Households*																Heads of Coventry Host Households		
Male																			
1		1	*.7*			3	*3.5*		1	4	*6.3*		1	5	*5.5*		*8.8*	*1.5*	*1.2*
2		9	*6.7*	1		10	*11.8*	2		6	*9.4*	3		13	*14.3*		*21.5*	*11.7*	*17.5*
3	2	56	*41.5*	7		32	*27.6*			28	*43.8*	4	1	29	*31.9*	3	*38.1*	*56.9*	*59.8*
4	1	26	*19.3*			9	*10.6*	2		14	*21.9*	1		31	*34.1*	2	*19.3*	*21.7*	*12.6*
5	1	41	*30.4*	4		31	*36.5*	2	2	12	*18.8*	3		11	*12.1*		*10.5*	*7.6*	*7.9*
X		2	*1.5*											1	*1.1*		*1.7*	*.5*	*1.0*
Total	**4**	**135**		**12**		**85**		**6**	**3**	**64**		**11**	**2**	**91**		**5**	181	7,452	405
Female																			
1												6		2	*25.0*		*5.9*	*.5*	*3.4*
2								1	1			1					*13.7*	*4.7*	*10.6*
3	2	2	*33.3*	9	3	3	*27.2*	7				7				6	*57.0*	*50.2*	*49.7*
4	1			7		4	*36.4*	9						1	*12.5*	1	*12.2*	*10.2*	*13.0*
5	4	1	*16.7*	11	2	3	*27.2*	5		1	*1.5*	10		1	*12.5*	3	*4.1*	*10.2*	*6.3*
X		3	*50.0*	5		1	*9.1*	6				10		4	*50.0*	6	*7.0*	*24.2*	*17.0*
Total	**7**	**6**		**32**	**5**	**11**		**28**	**1**	**1**		**34**		**8**		**16**	270	215	1,134
T	**11**	**141**		**44**	**5**	**96**		**34**	**4**	**65**		**44**	**2**	**99**		**21**	451	7,667	1,539
	Non-Irish-born Heads of *Irish Households*																N=9,657		
Male																			
1		2	*3.4*			1	*2.4*			3	*8.3*			1	*1.9*				
2		5	*8.6*			4	*9.5*			4	*11.1*			9	*17.0*				
3		40	*69.0*			29	*69.0*			20	*55.6*			22	*41.5*				
4		8	*13.8*			4	*9.5*			6	*16.7*			14	*26.4*				
5		3	*5.2*			2	*4.8*			3	*8.3*			7	*13.2*				
X						2	*4.8*												
Total		**58**				**42**				**36**				**53**					
T		**199**				**138**				**101**				**152**					

Barracks and Institutions excluded in all columns. Heads of *Irish Households* excluded from host population.
Coventry Host: 12 households with no evidence of head.
Source: ADB

Table 6.12 The Irish-born male & female heads of *Irish Households* assigned to Classes 1 & 2 on the basis of occupation or employment of extra staff 1881-1891 **Source: ADB**

1881	A		C	1891	A		C	1901	A		C
Binley Zephaniah 1871: Class 2		Foleshill Reg District				Foleshill Reg District		Zephaniah Binley	81	Retired Farmer	2
Deacon Job	63	Draper	2	Deacon Job	73	Draper (Master)	2	x			
Hart James 1871: Class 1		x		Hart James	62	Ribbon Manufacturer		x			
De Lesset Robert K.	46	Dentist	1	x				x			
Hennessey Thomas	44	Boot & shoe manufacturer	2	Class 3		Bootmaker		x			
McVeagh Denis	56	Physician	1	McVeagh Dennis	66	Physician JP	1	McVeagh Dennis	76	Physician	1
Smyth Ralph	57	Gilder Printseller, tailor e13m3b	2	x				x			
McDermott John	73	Inspector of police (Superin'dent)	2	x				x			
Logan Thomas	73	Army pensioner & accountant	2	Logan Thomas	73	Army pen, ret solic' clerk	2	x			
Brooks William	56	Annuitant from money	2	x				x			
Donelly Patrick	70	Retired hat manufacturer	2	x				x			
Fenton Mark A *	32	Doctor of medicine	1	Mark A Fenton	42	Medical practitioner	1	x			
Kelly Thomas	44	Boot manufacturer	2	x				x			
Mullin James	45	Supervisor Inland Revenue	2	x				x			
Simpson John *	36	Draper emp 13 hands	2	John Simpson	46	Draper, house furnisher	2	Simpson John	55	Draper shopkeeper	2
Turner Edward James	54	Agent to Silk Scarf manufacturer	2	Turner Edward Jas	64	Manufacturer & agent	2	x			
				Adams Samuel *	35	Licensed Victualler	2	x			
				Cuffe George *	44	Clerk in Holy Orders	1	x			
				Holmes Isaac	63	Postmaster	2	x			
				Mills James R *	39	Vicar Of St Michaels	1	x			
				Rice William *	33	Practitioner of medicine	1	Rice William R	42	Physician	1
				Sinclair Finley *	33	Cycle manufacturer	2	Sinclair Finlay	43	Director rubber tyre co	2
								Belcher John H	44	Principal Tech Coll	2
								Buchanan John	46	S'visor Inl'd Revenue	2
								Bullen William A *	35	Medical practitioner	1
								Callaghan James L *	42	Physician	1
								Cullen Joseph Hugh	46	Chartered accountant	1
				Class 3		Clothes dealer		Dolan Patrick	70	General dealer	2
								Harmer Oscar *	51	Gen manager machine tool	2
								London John	53	Farmer	2
								Maguire John	28	Ass school teacher	2
								Maloney Patrick J *	28	Manager tyre co	2
								Monahan William B *	33	Clergyman (C of E)	1
								Rudd John A	27	Cashier, Acc Cycle co	2
								Stephens Ernest A *	27	Manager tyre works	2
								Tuke Benjamin B *	31	Tyre manufacturer	2
				Class X		No occupation					
Lea Jane	65	Annuitant	2								
				Moore Mary A	50	School mistress	1				

Table 6.13
Collated occupations of male Irish-born married Heads of *Irish Households* in Class 3 for 1881-1901. Showing separately the occupations of male Non-Irish-born married Heads of *Irish Households* in Class 3. Also occupations of male and female Irish-born solo Heads of *Irish Households* in Class 3

	1881			1891			1901		
Male	**I-b**	**N-I-b**	**I-b S M**	**I-b**	**N-I-b**	**I-b S M**	**I-b**	**N-I-b**	**I-b S M**
Weaver silk	5	6		4	2		2		
Plush weaver		1							
Silk winder				1					
Elastic weaver		1							
Cordwainer/Shoemaker/Bootmaker	7	3		5	1	1	2		
Collector & sales manager silk goods							1		
Pattern maker					1				
Tailoring	1						1		
Hair dresser/barber		1							
Publican		2			1			1	
Marine store dealer	2			1		1			
Dealer general/china dealer	4	1		1			1		
Dealer in clothes/Broker	2			1					
Draper/Clothier	1								
Baker & flour dealer/baker/yeast						1			1
Chemist		1			1				
Fruiterer/Grocer/Tobacconist				1			1	1	
Butcher								1	
Commercial traveller								1	
Blacksmith								1	
Steel & iron worker/turner/ millwright /fitter/moulder	2						3		
Watch cap maker		3			2			1	
Watch glass maker/Retd same/Hand maker/balance maker/escapement maker	1	2			1	1			1
Watch gilder/Watch jeweller/Jewel dove tail maker	1	1			2		1	1	
Watch tool maker		1							
Watchmaker		1		1	2				
Engine fitter/Motor engine maker								2	
Carpenter & joiner/Carpenter/shopkeeper &joiner		1							
Wood sawyer				1					
Nursery gardener							1		
Coal miner							1		
Builder's foreman								1	
Painter house/Painter & glazier	2			2			2	1	
Sweep		1						1	
Police constable					1				
Soldier				1	2	1		1	
Barrack sergeant	1			1					

Table 6.13 Continued

	1881			1891			1901		
	I-b	N-I-b	I-b S M	I-b	N-I-b	I-b S M	I-b	N-I-b	I-b S M
Clerk to corn merchant/Solicitor's clerk/Clerk: in tyre factory/in cycle works/post office/iron foundry				1			5	1	
Railway clerk								1	
Insurance agent				1					
Box Maker	1								
Coach painter							1		
Army Pensioner		2		1	1		1		1
Electrical engineer								1	
Engine driver		1					1		
Steam roller engine driver					1			1	
Lodging house keeper					1		1		
Fire engine station attendant								1	
Cycle: rim maker foreman/fitter/inspector/store keeper/mechanic/saddler/manufacturer				3	1	1	3	2	
Locksmith & dealer in old books								1	
Postman							1		
Printer	1								
Artist engraver copper & zinc									1
Lithographic artist								1	
Total	31	29		26	20	6	29	22	4
Total number of household heads	82	42	9	61	36	17	90	53	8
%	37.8	69.0		42.6	55.5	35.3	31.2	41.5	50.0

Female	I-b S F	I-b S F	I-b S F
Coach lace weaver	2	1	
Weaver	1		
Warper	1	1	
Winder	1		1
Dealer general/shopkeeper	1		1
Grocer			
Marine store dealer	1		
Wardrobe dealer		1	
Dealer in clothes	1		
Seamstress/Dressmaker/Tailoress	2	2	1
Lodging house keeper	2	1	2
Licensed victualler/Innkeeper		1	1
Shopkeeper (watch tools)	1		
Total	13	7	6
Total number of household heads	45	36	24
%	28.8	19.4	25.0

I-b SM = Irish-born solo Male. I-b SF = Irish-born solo Female Source: ADB

Table 6.14 Allocation of occupations of Irish-born and Irishcom males according to Booth's principles 1841-1901

		Irish-born							Irishcom						
Year		'41	'51	'61	'71	'81	'91	'01	'41	'51	'61	'71	'81	'91	'01
Agriculture															
Farming	**1**	11	12	21	20	23	8	7	15	13	21	21	23	10	7
Land Service	**2**														
Breeding	**3**	1	1		3				1	1	2	4	1		
Fishing	**4**														
Mining															
Mining	**1**		1					1		1					2
Quarrying	**2**			1				1			1				1
Brickmaking	**3**		1							4	1	2	1		
Salt & waterworks	**4**				1							1			
Building															
Management	**1**	1	13	1					1	15	1	1	1	1	1
Operative	**2**	8	7	19	13	10	7	13	9	11	23	21	18	12	19
Roadmaking	**3**	1		1				1	1		2			1	3
Manufacture															
Machinery	**1**			1			13	40		2	2		2	37	62
Tools, etc.	**2**	1				1		1	1				1		2
Shipbuilding	**3**												1		
Iron & steel	**4**			2	1	5	2	9	1		3	4	11	9	15
Copper, tin, lead etc.	**5**		1					1		3	3		2	1	2
Gold & silver	**6**														
Earthenware	**7**		1		1					1	1	1	1	1	
Coals & gas	**8**		2	1		3	5	9		2	3	1	3	6	11
Chemicals	**9**														
Furs & leather	**10**			1							1				
Glue tallow etc.	**11**			2	1						2	1			
Hair etc	**12**													1	
Woodworkers	**13**	1	3	2		2	1	1	2	3	3		3	1	1
Furniture	**14**	1	3	2					1	3	3				
Carriages & harness	**15**	1	3	2			2	2	1	3	2			2	3
Paper	**16**		1			1				1			1	1	
Floorcloth, waterproofs	**17**						1							1	
Woollens	**18**														
Cotton & silk	**19**	83	97	69	25	12	6	4	108	147	112	54	32	13	4
Flax, hemp etc.	**20**		1	1						1	1				
Lace	**21**		1	1	1	1	1			2	1	2	4	3	1
Dyeing	**22**	5	5	2	1	1	1		7	6	5	3	3	2	1
Dress	**23**	21	33	30	27	19	9	3	27	46	40	37	28	12	4
Sundries	**24**	2	1	2					2	1	2		1		
Food preparation	**25**		1		1					1		1			
Baking	**26**	1	2	3	1	1			2	2	4	1	4	3	
Drink preparation	**27**		3		1	2	1	1	1	3		1	2	3	1
Smoking	**28**														
Watches, instruments, toys	**29**	3	8	10	13	7	3	4	4	24	32	47	40	15	8
Printing	**30**	3		1		1	2		3		1	5	3	2	1
Unspecified	**31**	2	5	3		1	4	1	2	8	7		5	5	5

Table 6.14 Allocation of occupations of Irish-born and Irishcom males according to Booth's principles 1841-1901

		Irish-born							Irishcom						
Year		'41	'51	'61	'71	'81	'91	'01	'41	'51	'61	'71	'81	'91	'01
Agriculture															
Farming	**1**	11	12	21	20	23	8	7	15	13	21	21	23	10	7
Land Service	**2**														
Breeding	**3**	1	1		3				1	1	2	4	1		
Fishing	**4**														
Mining															
Mining	**1**		1					1		1					2
Quarrying	**2**			1				1			1				1
Brickmaking	**3**		1							4	1	2	1		
Salt & waterworks	**4**				1							1			
Building															
Management	**1**	1	13	1					1	15	1	1	1	1	1
Operative	**2**	8	7	19	13	10	7	13	9	11	23	21	18	12	19
Roadmaking	**3**	1		1				1	1		2			1	3
Manufacture															
Machinery	**1**			1			13	40		2	2		2	37	62
Tools, etc.	**2**	1				1		1	1				1		2
Shipbuilding	**3**												1		
Iron & steel	**4**			2	1	5	2	9	1		3	4	11	9	15
Copper, tin, lead etc.	**5**		1					1		3	3		2	1	2
Gold & silver	**6**														
Earthenware	**7**		1		1					1	1	1	1	1	
Coals & gas	**8**		2	1		3	5	9		2	3	1	3	6	11
Chemicals	**9**														
Furs & leather	**10**			1							1				
Glue tallow etc.	**11**			2	1						2	1			
Hair etc	**12**													1	
Woodworkers	**13**	1	3	2		2	1	1	2	3	3		3	1	1
Furniture	**14**	1	3	2					1	3	3				
Carriages & harness	**15**	1	3	2			2	2	1	3	2			2	3
Paper	**16**		1			1				1			1	1	
Floorcloth, waterproofs	**17**						1							1	
Woollens	**18**														
Cotton & silk	**19**	83	97	69	25	12	6	4	108	147	112	54	32	13	4
Flax, hemp etc.	**20**		1	1						1	1				
Lace	**21**		1	1	1	1	1			2	1	2	4	3	1
Dyeing	**22**	5	5	2	1	1	1		7	6	5	3	3	2	1
Dress	**23**	21	33	30	27	19	9	3	27	46	40	37	28	12	4
Sundries	**24**	2	1	2					2	1	2		1		
Food preparation	**25**		1		1					1		1			
Baking	**26**	1	2	3	1	1			2	2	4	1	4	3	
Drink preparation	**27**		3		1	2	1	1	1	3		1	2	3	1
Smoking	**28**														
Watches, instruments, toys	**29**	3	8	10	13	7	3	4	4	24	32	47	40	15	8
Printing	**30**	3		1		1	2		3		1	5	3	2	1
Unspecified	**31**	2	5	3		1	4	1	2	8	7		5	5	5

Table 6.15 Allocation of occupations of Irish-born and Irishcom females according to Booth's principles 1841-1901

		Irish-born							Irishcom						
Year		'41	'51	'61	'71	'81	'91	'01	'41	'51	'61	'71	'81	'91	'01
Agriculture															
Farming	1												1		
Building															
Operative	2			1							1				
Manufacture															
Machinery	1				1		3	3				1		5	13
Tools, etc.	2												1		
Shipbuilding	3												1		
Iron & steel	4														2
Furs & leather	10				1							1			
Woodworkers	13													1	1
Furniture	14			2							2	1	1		
Paper	16											4	3		
Woollens	18				1							8	3	3	
Cotton & silk	19	78	81	90	41	24	13	12	108	185	185	128	68	29	21
Lace	21		2	5	9	7	3			2	5	14	14		2
Dyeing	22		4	1						10	1				
Dress	23	4	24	10	5	10	4	3	7	28	19	18	20	16	10
Sundries	24			1							1				
Baking	26			1							2				
Drink preparation	27		1							1					
Smoking	28							1		1			1		1
Watches, instruments, toys	29		1			1						2	4		3
Printing	30												1	1	
Unspecified	31		2					1	1	2		1		2	1
Transport															
Warehouses & docks	1					1		1					1		1
Dealing															
Dress	4		2	1			1			4	1		1	2	1
Food	5		1		2	1	1			3		3	1	1	
Wines, Spirits, hotels	7			1			1	1			1			1	1
Lodging & coffee houses	8	1		2	2	2		3	1		2	2	2		3
Furniture	9						1	1						1	1
Stationery & publications	10											1	1		
Household utensils, ornaments	11				1							1			
General dealers	12		10	11	8	11	2	2		12	14	11	12	2	2
Unspecified	13		4	2			2	1		4	4	1		2	1
Industrial Service															
Banking, insurance, accountancy	1		1					2		1					5
Labour	2		1							1					1

Table 6.15 Continued															
		‘41	‘51	‘61	‘71	‘81	‘91	‘01	‘41	‘51	‘61	‘71	‘81	‘91	‘01
Public Service and Professional															
Central administration	**1**									1	1				
	4												1		
Medicine	**8**			1		2	2	8			1		3	2	9
Art (music etc.)	**10**				1							1			
Education	**13**		1	2	5	6	8	10		1	2	5	10	10	12
Domestic Service															
Indoor	**1**	2	29	28	15	13	8	18	3	36	38	19	19	12	20
Outdoor	**2**			1							1				
Extra service	**3**	3	39	71	47	29	17	7	4	43	76	50	33	17	10
Property owning and Independent		2	1	2		3	10	3	2	1	2		3	10	3
Dependent		120	163	152	115	66	85	120	319	360	427	337	232	218	303
Total		210	367	385	254	178	161	197	445	697	786	609	438	355	427
Source: ADB															

Table 6.16 St. Michael & St. John/Holy Trinity 1881 Barracks excluded Map Area 15

Map	ED RG 11/			Key Street	I-born	Irish com	I-born as % of city I-born	I-born as % of city Icom	Irishcom as % of city Icom	LQ
St. Michael & St. John										
1	3066	392/1	1	Broadgate	1	1	*.3*	*.1*	*.1*	.1
2			2	Jordan Well	8	21	*2.3*	*1.0*	*2.5*	2.8
3			3	Gosford	4	8	*1.1*	*.5*	*1.0*	.9
4			4	Much Park						
5			5	White Friar	9	22	*2.5*	*1.1*	*2.6*	2.1
6			6	London Rd	6	13	*1.7*	*.7*	*1.6*	1.1
7			7	St. John						
8			8	St. John/Much Park	10	18	*2.8*	*1.2*	*2.2*	2.1
9			9	Earl	3	6	*.8*	*.4*	*.7*	.9
10	3067	392/1	10	Little Park	6	12	*1.7*	*.7*	*1.4*	1.0
11			11	Cow Lane	9	25	*2.5*	*1.1*	*3.0*	2.8
12			12	Greyfriars Lane	8	24	*2.3*	*1.0*	*2.9*	3.9
13			13	Warwick Lane	13	15	*3.7*	*1.6*	*1.8*	1.6
14			14	Warwick Rd	4	18	*1.1*	*.5*	*2.2*	1.6
15			15	Smithford						
				Barracks	(15)	(15)				
16			16	Whitley	2	2	*.6*	*.2*	*.2*	.4
17			17	Cox	4	15	*1.1*	*.5*	*1.8*	1.4
18			18	Gosford 1-63	2	5	*.6*	*.2*	*.6*	.3
19	3068	392/1	19	Gosford 64-106	6	7	*1.7*	*.7*	*.8*	.6
20			20	Charterhouse	1	3	*.3*	*.1*	*.4*	.3
21			21	Red Lane						
22			22	Fleet	3	11	.8	*.4*	*1.3*	.6
23			23	Crow Lane	1	4	*.3*	*.1*	*.5*	.3
24			24	Spon 45	2	7	*.6*	*.2*	*.8*	.5
25			25	Spon 88	5	12	*1.4*	*.6*	*1.4*	1.3
26	3069	392/1	26	Spon 114	3	10	*.9*	*.4*	*1.2*	.8
27			27	Spon 174	7	13	*2.0*	*.8*	*1.6*	.6
28			28	Gas	5	6	*1.4*	*.6*	*.7*	.6
29			29	Hill	6	11	*1.7*	*.7*	*1.3*	1.9
30			30	Butts	3	10	*.8*	*.4*	*1.2*	.6
31			31	Thomas	4	10	*1.1*	*.5*	*1.2*	.7
32	3070	392/1	32	Albion	1	6	*.3*	*.1*	*.7*	.4
33			33	Hertford Place	4	13	*1.1*	*.5*	*1.6*	.8
34			34	Spon End	4	10	*1.1*	*.5*	*1.2*	.6
35			35	Craven	4	16	*1.1*	*.5*	*1.9*	1.1
36			36	Earlsdon	1	3	*.3*	*.1*	*.4*	.1
37			37	Workhouse	14	14	*4.0*	*1.7*	*1.7*	1.8

Table 6.16 Continued **Holy Trinity**										
38	3071	392/2	1	Burges	4	11	*1.1*	*.5*	*1.3*	1.2
39			2	West Orchard	12	26	*3.4*	*1.4*	*3.1*	2.8
40			3	Well	16	57	*4.5*	*1.9*	*6.8*	3.9
41			4	Upper Well	14	30	*4.0*	*1.7*	*3.6*	1.2
42			5	St. Nicholas	3	7	*.9*	*.4*	*.8*	.5
43			6	Drapers Fields	1	1	*.3*	*.1*	*.1*	.1
44			7	Cook	6	16	*1.7*	*.7*	*1.9*	1.6
45	3072	392/2	8	Chauntry Place	1	4	*.3*	*.1*	*.5*	.3
46			9	Palmer Lane	27	44	*7.6*	*3.2*	*5.3*	5.6
47			10	New Buildings	20	48	*5.7*	*2.4*	*5.8*	4.4
48			11	Priory Row	2	8	*.6*	*.2*	*1.0*	.5
49			12	Paynes Lane	6	19	*1.7*	*.7*	*2.3*	1.7
50			13	Brook	2	8	*.6*	*.2*	*1.0*	.6
51			14	Canterbury	9	20	*2.5*	*1.1*	*2.4*	1.4
52	3073	392/2	15	Vine	3	4	*.8*	*.4*	*.5*	.4
53			16	Ford	9	12	*2.5*	*1.1*	*1.4*	.5
54			17	King	5	14	*1.4*	*.6*	*1.7*	.8
55			18	Albert	6	13	*1.7*	*.7*	*1.6*	.6
56			19	Adelaide	6	27	*1.7*	*.7*	*3.2*	1.5
57	3074	392/2	20	Swanswell	1	4	*.3*	*.1*	*.5*	.3
58			21	Far Gosford	1	1	*.3*	*.1*	*.1*	.1
59			22	Harnall Place	3	10	*.8*	*.4*	*1.2*	1.5
60			23	East & South	3	6	*.8*	*.4*	*.7*	.3
61			24	Leicester	6	12	*1.7*	*.7*	*1.4*	.8
62	3075	392/2	25	Tower/Henry	8	34	*2.3*	*1.0*	*4.1*	1.7
63			26	Stoney Stanton Rd	5	11	*1.4*	*.6*	*1.3*	.5
64			27	Stanton	4	8	*1.1*	*.5*	*1.0*	.4
65			28	Radford	7	7	*2.0*	*.8*	*.8*	.5
					368	848	Figures in directly above columns do not include Barracks in their calculation			

Table 6.17 St. Michael & St. John/Holy Trinity 1901									Barracks excluded Map Area 26		
Map	ED RG 13/			Key Street	I-born	Irish com	I-born as % of city I-born	I-born as % of city Icom	Irishcom as % of city Icom	I-born LQ	Icom LQ
St. Michael & St. John											
1	2906	392/1A	1	Broadgate	6	17	*1.5*	*.7*	*2.0*	3.1	4.1
2			2	Jordan Well	6	11	*1.5*	*.7*	*1.3*	1.1	1.0
3			3	Gosford St North	5	13	*1.2*	*.6*	*1.5*	.9	1.1
4			4	Gosford /Whitefriars	2	7	*.5*	*.2*	*.8*	.4	.7
5			5	London Road	1	3	*.2*	*.1*	*.4*	.2	.3
6			6	Whitefriar/MP St	13	31	*3.2*	*1.5*	*3.7*	1.6	1.9
7			7	MP St/St. John	10	19	*2.5*	*1.2*	*2.2*	1.6	1.5
8			8	St. John/Parkside	3	4	*.7*	*.4*	*.5*	.6	.4
9			9	Cheylesmore	3	3	*.7*	*.4*	*.4*	.6	.3
10			10	Cow Lane	12	27	*3.0*	*1.4*	*3.2*	2.3	2.5
11	2907	392/1B	11	Smithford St	15	21	*3.7*	*1.8*	*2.5*	2.3	1.5
12			12	Albion St	10	14	*2.5*	*1.2*	*1.7*	1.4	.9
13			13	Fleet St/Spon	2	5	*.5*	*.2*	*.6*	.4	.4
14			14	Spon St	3	13	*.7*	*.4*	*1.5*	.4	.9
15			15	Butts 1-49	1	1	*.2*	*.1*	*.1*	.2	.1
16			16	Trafalgar St	7	18	*1.7*	*.8*	*2.1*	1.0	1.2
17			17	Queens Rd	24	44	*5.9*	*2.8*	*5.2*	2.4	2.1
18			18	Earlsdon	6	8	*1.5*	*.7*	*.9*	.7	.5
19	2908	392/1C	19	Hearsall Lane	4	13	*1.0*	*.5*	*1.5*	.6	.9
20			20	Chapel fields	3	7	*.7*	*.4*	*.8*	.4	.5
21			21	Spon End	6	11	*1.5*	*.7*	*1.3*	.9	.8
22			22	Spon St from 184	10	11	*2.5*	*1.2*	*1.3*	1.6	.8
23			23	Holyhead Rd	15	28	*3.7*	*1.8*	*3.3*	2.5	2.2
24			24	Hill St	9	26	*2.2*	*1.1*	*3.1*	1.7	2.3
25	2909	392/1D	25	Whitley	1	1	*.2*	*.1*	*.1*	.6	.3
26	2908		Barracks		(11)	(14)					
27	2908		Workhouse		14	14	*3.4*	*1.7*	*1.7*	5.3	2.5

Table 6.17 Continued

Holy Trinity

28	2910	392/2 A	1	Well St	9	20	*2.2*	*1.1*	*2.*	1.5	1.5
29			2	Upper Well St	11	13	*2.7*	*1.3*	*1.5*	1.6	.9
30			3	Lamb/Chapel	13	19	*3.2*	*1.5*	*2.2*	1.8	1.2
31			4	Widdrington Rd	4	9	*1.0*	*.5*	*1.1*	.6	.7
32			5	Drapers Field	5	8	*1.2*	*.6*	*.9*	.7	.5
33			6	Howard/Byron	6	12	*1.5*	*.7*	*1.4*	.9	.8
34			7	Hospital/Foleshill Rd	10	14	*2.5*	*1.2*	*1.7*	1.4	.9
35			8	Foleshill Rd	2	6	*.5*	*.2*	*.7*	.3	.5
36			9	Leicester St	9	26	*2.2*	*1.1*	*3.1*	1.6	2.2
37	2911	392/2 B	10	Red Lane	3	14	*.7*	*.4*	*1.7*	.3	.8
38			11	Eagle St	2	5	*.5*	*.2*	*.6*	.3	.4
39			12	Harnall Lane, 5 Ways	1	1	*.2*	*.1*	*.1*	.1	.1
40			13	Stoney Stanton Rd	3	3	*.7*	*.4*	*.4*	.5	.2
41			14	Swanswell St	4	20	*1.0*	*.5*	*2.4*	.6	1.5
42			15	Victoria St	1	4	*.2*	*.1*	*.5*	.2	.3
43			16	King William St	3	9	*.7*	*.4*	*1.1*	.4	.5
44			17	Cambridge St	10	14	*2.5*	*1.2*	*1.7*	1.4	.9
45			18	Redcar Rd	1	8	*.2*	*.1*	*.9*	.2	.6
46			19	Freehold St	4	15	*1.0*	*.5*	*1.8*	.6	1.1
47	2912	392/2 C	20	Lower Yardley St	1	7	*.2*	*.1*	*.8*	.2	.6
48			21	Upper Nelson St	1	4	*.2*	*.1*	*.5*	.1	.2
49			22	Canterbury St	3	6	*.7*	*.4*	*.7*	.4	.4
50			23	Alma/Raglan St	13	24	*3.2*	*1.5*	*2.8*	1.7	1.5
51			24	Paynes Lane	18	26	*4.4*	*2.1*	*3.1*	2.8	1.9
52			25	Winchester St	3	9	*.7*	*.4*	*1.1*	.5	.7
53			26	Jesson/Priory St	13	27	*3.2*	*1.5*	*3.2*	1.8	1.8
54			27	Palmer Lane	7	19	*1.7*	*.8*	*2.2*	1.5	1.9
55			28	Far Gosford 7-83	9	18	*2.2*	*1.1*	*2.1*	1.2	1.1
56	2913	392/2 D	29	East St/South St	13	26	*3.2*	*1.5*	*3.1*	1.5	1.4
57			30	Derby Lane/Freeth	3	15	*.7*	*.4*	*1.8*	1.1	2.6
58			30	Far Gosford 88-168	8	14	*2.0*	*.9*	*1.7*	2.5	2.1
59			31	Stoke	6	13	*1.5*	*.7*	*1.5*	1.0	1.1
60			32	Stoke Knob	1	8	*.2*	*.1*	*.9*	.2	.6
61			33	Princes Street	5	22	*1.2*	*.6*	*2.6*	.7	1.4
62			34	Broad Street	5	10	*1.2*	*.6*	*1.2*	.6	.6
63			35	Edgewick Fields	1	4	*.2*	*.1*	*.5*	.1	.3
64			36	Station St West	2	3	*.5*	*.2*	*.4*	.3	.2
65			37	Lockhurst Lane	2	3	*.5*	*.2*	*.4*	.3	.2
					417	862	Figures in directly above columns do not include Barracks in their calculation				

Contents of Book 392/2D District 30 did not represent a sequence of reasonably contiguous streets and so was split into Map Areas 57 & 58

Table A.20.1 St. John/Holy Trinity 1911 Barracks excluded Map Area 28 *Not first street listed in enumeration book

Map	ED RG14/	ED	Key Street	I-born	Irish com	I-born as % of city I-born	I-born as % of city Icom	Icom as % of city Icom	Accidental I-born	Boarders I-b	Mar I-b/I-b	Mar I-b /Icom	Mar Icom / I-b
St. John Reg District 390/1													
1	18511	1	Broadgate	1	1	*.2*	*.1*	*.1*					
2	18512	2	Godiva St	15	32	*2.4*	*1.1*	*2.4*		1	2	1	2
3	18513	3	St Georges Rd	8	16	*1.3*	*.6*	*1.2*		5		1	2
4	18514	4	Far Gosford St	4	8	*.7*	*.3*	*.6*	1			1	2
5	18515	5	Gulson Rd	10	11	*1.6*	*.7*	*.8*		1		1	
6	18516	6	White Friars Lane	14	30	*2.3*	*1.0*	*2.2*	1	3	1	2	2
7	18517	7	Earl St	8	22	*1.3*	*.6*	*1.6*	1	3		2	
8	18518	8	High St	8	18	*1.3*	*.6*	*1.3*	1	1		2	1
9	18519	9	Greyfriars Lane	10	15	*1.6*	*.7*	*1.1*		3			1
10	18520	10	Fleet St	3	6	*.5*	*.2*	*.4*				1	
11	18521	11	Albion St	6	12	*1.0*	*.4*	*.9*	2	2		1	
12	18522	12	Hope St	8	24	*1.3*	*.6*	*1.8*	1		1	1	4
13	18523	13	Warwick Road*	12	19	*2.0*	*.9*	*1.4*	3	2		2	1
14	18524	14	Trafalgar St *	6	21	*1.0*	*.4*	*1.6*		1		2	2
15	18525	15	Albany Road*	3	11	*.5*	*.2*	*.8*				2	
16	18526	16	Earlsdon St	10	39	*1.6*	*.7*	*2.9*	2			3	4
17	18527	17	Radcliffe Road*	6	14	*1.0*	*.4*	*1.0*	2			1	2
18	18528	18	Earlsdon Lane	9	20	*1.5*	*.7*	*1.5*			3		2
19	18529	19	Westwood Road	5	6	*.8*	*.4*	*.4*		3			1
20	18530	20	Broomfield Road	1	2	*.2*	*.1*	*.1*				1	
21	18531	21	Melbourne Road*	13	24	*2.1*	*1.0*	*1.8*	3			2	3
22	18532	22	Spon End	3	11	*.5*	*.2*	*.8*				2	
23	18533	23	Crow Lane	8	12	*1.3*	*.6*	*.9*		2		2	
24	18534	24	Melville Road	14	23	*2.3*	*1.0*	*1.7*	2	1		1	1
25	18535	25	Smithford St*	17	30	*2.8*	*1.3*	*2.2*	1	5	1	3	2
26	18536	26	Holyhead Road	1	3	*.2*	*.1*	*.2*					1
27	18537	27	St. Michael Without	6	7	*1.0*	*.4*	*.5*			2		
28	18538	28	Barracks	(8)	(8)								
29	18538	29	Workhouse	10	10	*1.6*	*.7*	*.7*					

Table A.20.1 Continued

Holy Trinity (Reg District 390/2)

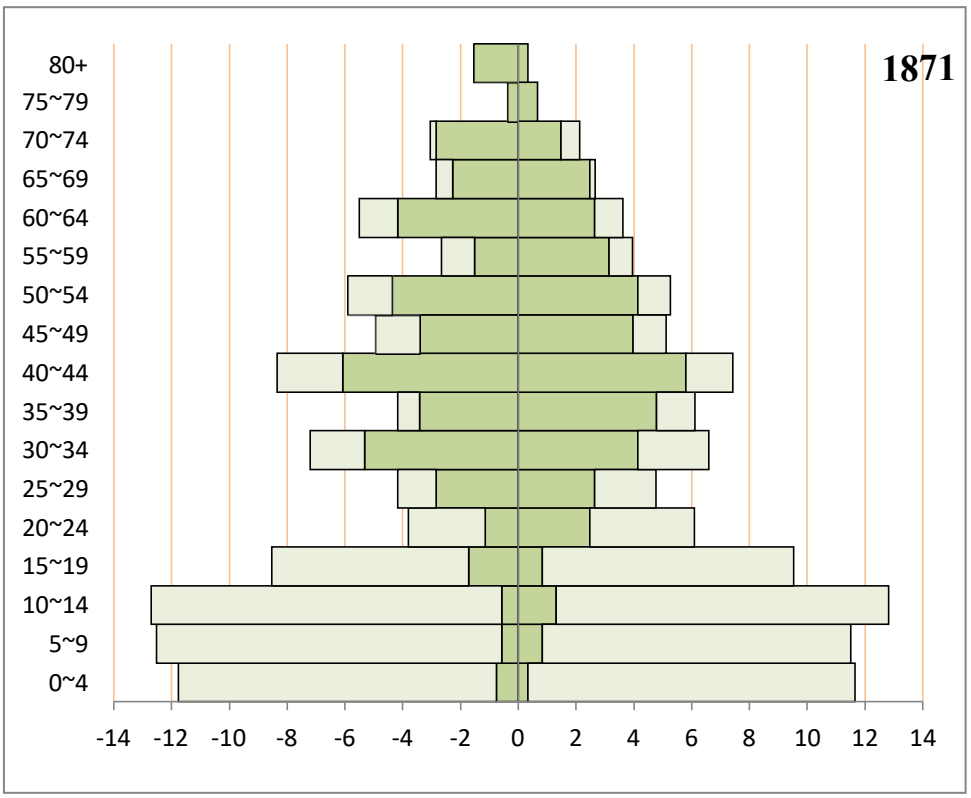
30	18539	1	West Orchard**	9	23	*1.5*	*.7*	*1.7*		4		2	2
31	18540	2	Bishop St	23	34	*3.7*	*1.7*	*2.5*		3	1	1	2
32	18541	3	Middleboro Road	7	13	*1.1*	*.5*	*1.0*		1		3	
33	18542	4	Widdrington Road	15	25	*2.4*	*1.1*	*1.9*		8	1	1	1
34	18543	5	Matlock Road	26	38	*4.2*	*1.9*	*2.8*		9	1	1	2
35	18544	6	Foleshill Road	4	13	*.7*	*.3*	*1.0*	1	1		1	1
36	18545	7	New Buildings*	13	22	*2.1*	*1.0*	*1.6*		9		4	
37	18546	8	Cox Street	9	32	*1.5*	*.7*	*2.4*	1	2		1	3
38	18547	9	Lower Ford St*	2	2	*.3*	*.1*	*.1*		2	1		
39	18548	10	Swanswell St	5	10	*.8*	*.4*	*.7*		1			1
40	18549	11	63 St' Stanton Rd	12	29	*2.0*	*.9*	*2.2*		3	2	2	1
41	18550	12	305 St' Stanton Rd	10	18	*1.6*	*.7*	*1.3*	2	2	1		3
42	18551	13	Keppel St	3	17	*.5*	*.2*	*1.3*				1	1
43	18552	14	Ordnance Road	13	18	*2.1*	*1.0*	*1.3*	3	5	1	1	1
44	18553	15	Red Lane	12	20	*2.0*	*.9*	*1.5*	1	1		2	1
45	18554	16	Adelaide St	5	19	*.8*	*.4*	*1.4*	1		1	2	2
46	18555	17	King William St	4	9	*.7*	*.3*	*.7*		3			1
47	18556	18	Berry St	5	10	*.8*	*.4*	*.7*	1	2		1	1
48	18557	19	Vine St	11	26	*1.8*	*.8*	*1.9*	4	1		1	3
49	18558	20	White St	9	16	*1.5*	*.7*	*1.2*	2	3	1	1	
50	18559	21	East St	11	42	*1.8*	*.8*	*3.1*	1	1		2	4
51	18560	22	Paynes Lane*	14	19	*2.3*	*1.0*	*1.4*		3	1		1
52	18561	23	Canterbury St	4	15	*.7*	*.3*	*1.1*			1		1
53	18562	24	Vernon St	13	46	*2.1*	*1.0*	*3.4*	1	2	1	1	3
54	18563	25	Walsgrave Road*	8	24	*1.3*	*.6*	*1.8*		1		3	1
55	18564	26	150 Far Gosford St	4	14	*.7*	*.3*	*1.0*		2		2	
56	18565	27	Binley Road	6	20	*1.0*	*.4*	*1.5*			1	1	3
57	18566	28	Harley St, Stoke	10	24	*1.6*	*.7*	*1.8*		1		2	5
58	18567	29	Stoke Green	3	12	*.5*	*.2*	*.9*			1	1	
59	18568	30	Swan Lane	13	42	*2.1*	*1.0*	*3.1*		4		2	3
60	18569	31	Heath Road*	3	5	*.5*	*.2*	*.4*			1	1	
61	18570	32	North St Stoke	3	9	*.5*	*.2*	*.7*	1				
62	18571	33	Catherine St	6	20	*1.0*	*.4*	*1.5*				3	2
63	18572	34	599 St' Stanton Rd	8	23	*1.3*	*.6*	*1.7*	3				4
64	18573	35	514 St' Stanton Rd	4	8	*.7*	*.3*	*.6*	1	1		1	1
65	18574	36	318 St' Stanton Rd	12	18	*2.0*	*.9*	*1.3*	2	6	1	1	1
66	18575	37	302 Foleshill Rd	9	22	*1.5*	*.7*	*1.6*		3	1	2	1
67	18576	38	Lockhurst Lane	7	9	*1.1*	*.5*	*.7*		1	1		1
68	18577	39	186 Lockhurst La	8	25	*1.3*	*.6*	*1.9*		2		1	3
69	18578	40	424 Foleshill Rd	13	31	*2.1*	*1.0*	*2.3*	2	2		4	3
70	18579	41	Leicester Row	6	9	*1.0*	*.4*	*.7*		2			
71	18580	42	36 Foleshill Rd	2	8	*.3*	*.1*	*.6*				2	
72	18581	43	78 St' Stanton Rd	4	9	*.7*	*.3*	*.7*		1	1		
73	18582	44	238 Foleshill Road	4	6	*.7*	*.3*	*.4*		1		1	
74	18583	45	Leicester St*	23	43	*3.7*	*1.7*	*3.2*	2	3	2	3	
75	18584	46	H Trinity W'hout										
76	18585	47	City Fever Hospital	1	1	*.2*	*.1*	*.1*					
				623	1353	*615*	*1345*	*1345*	49	129	32	92	96

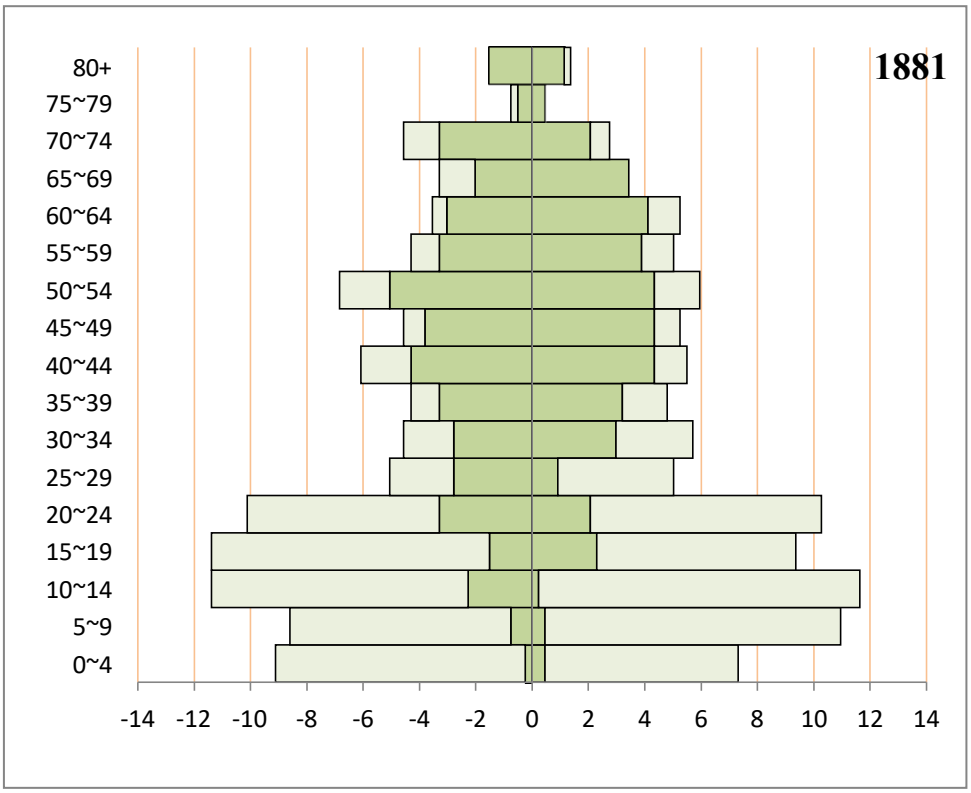
Colour of columns match shadings of Map 6.4.

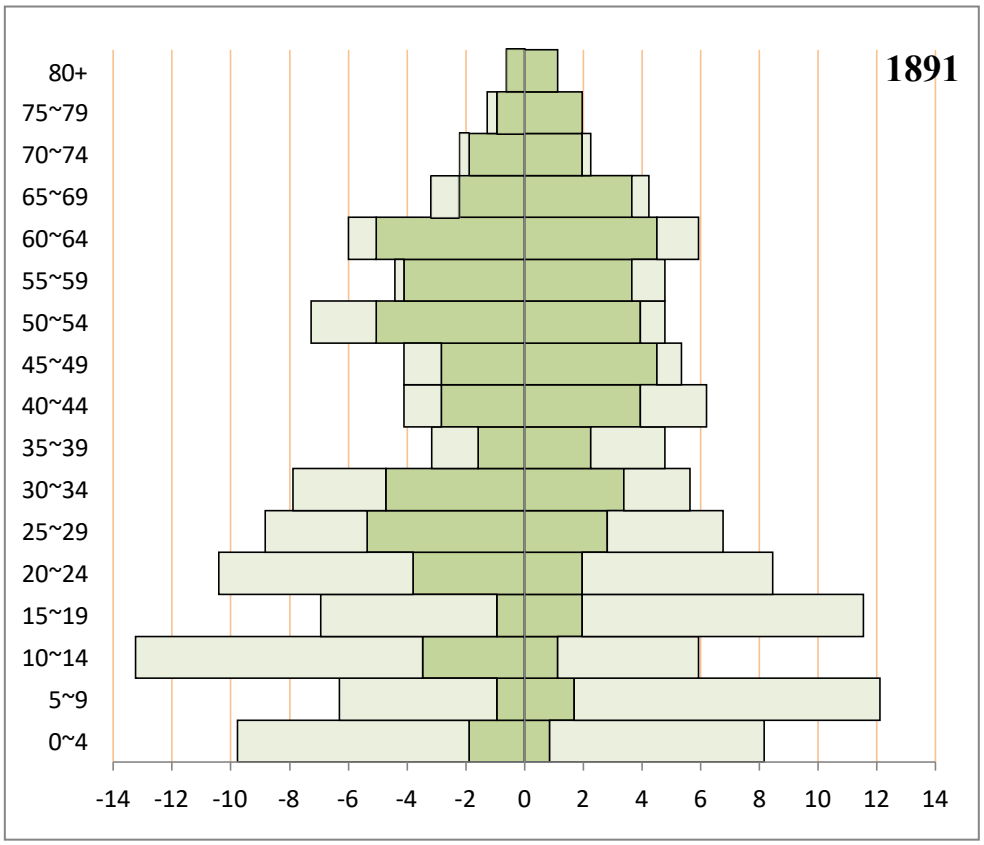
Figures in directly above columns do not include Barracks in their calculation

Chapter 6 Figures

Figure 6.1 Age and Sex structure of Irishcom and the proportion of Irish-born within 1871-1901






1891
80+
75~79
70~74
65~69
60~64
55~59
50~54
45~49
40~44
35~39
30~34
25~29
20~24
15~19
10~14
5~9
0~4
-14 -12 -10 -8 -6 -4 -2 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14

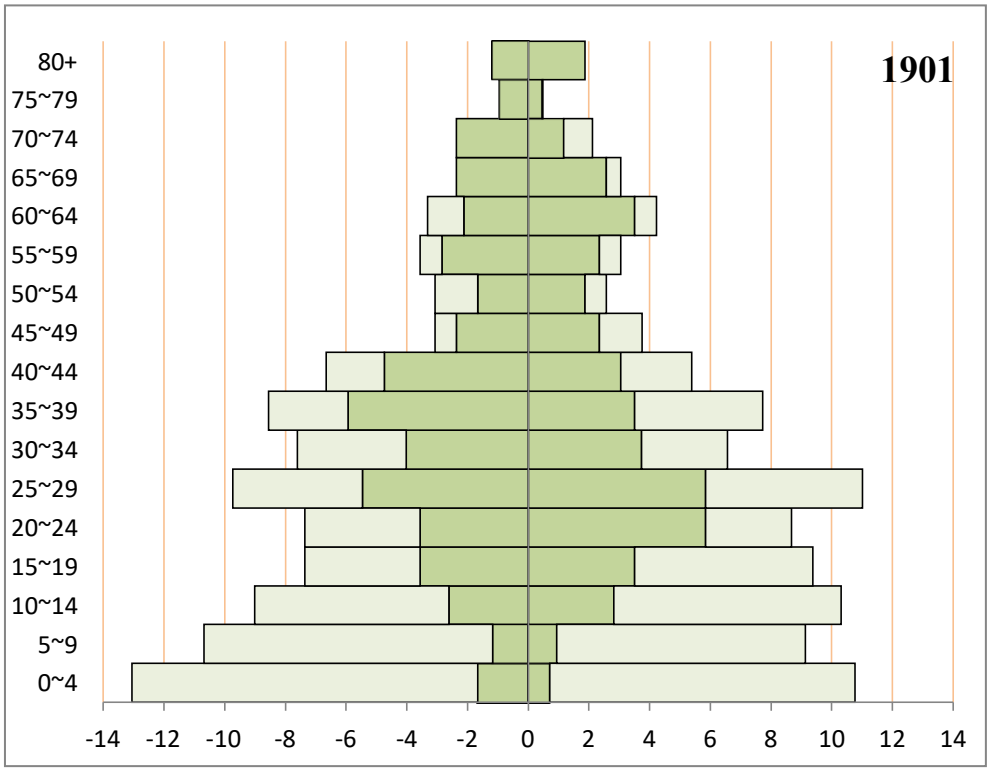
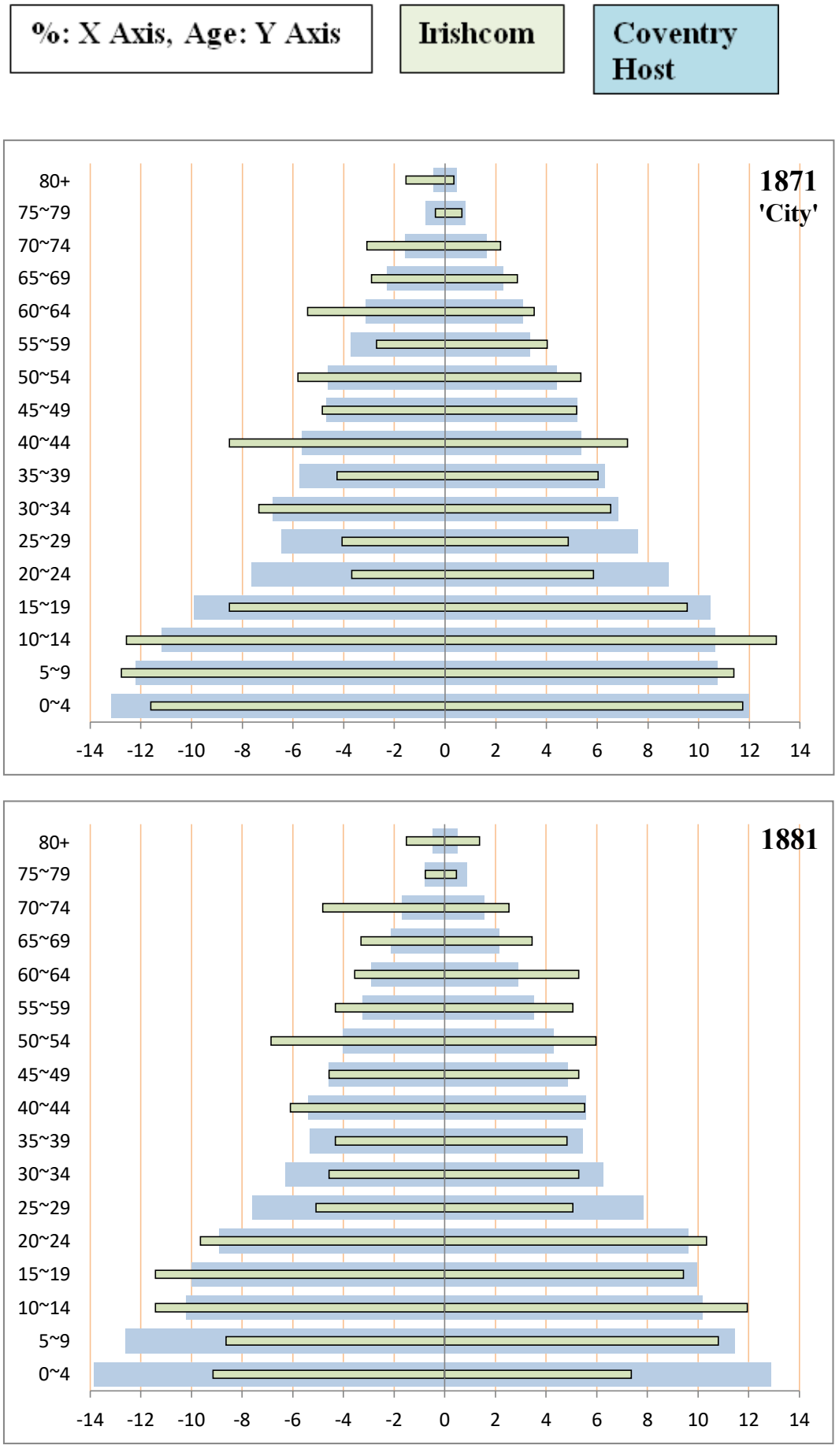
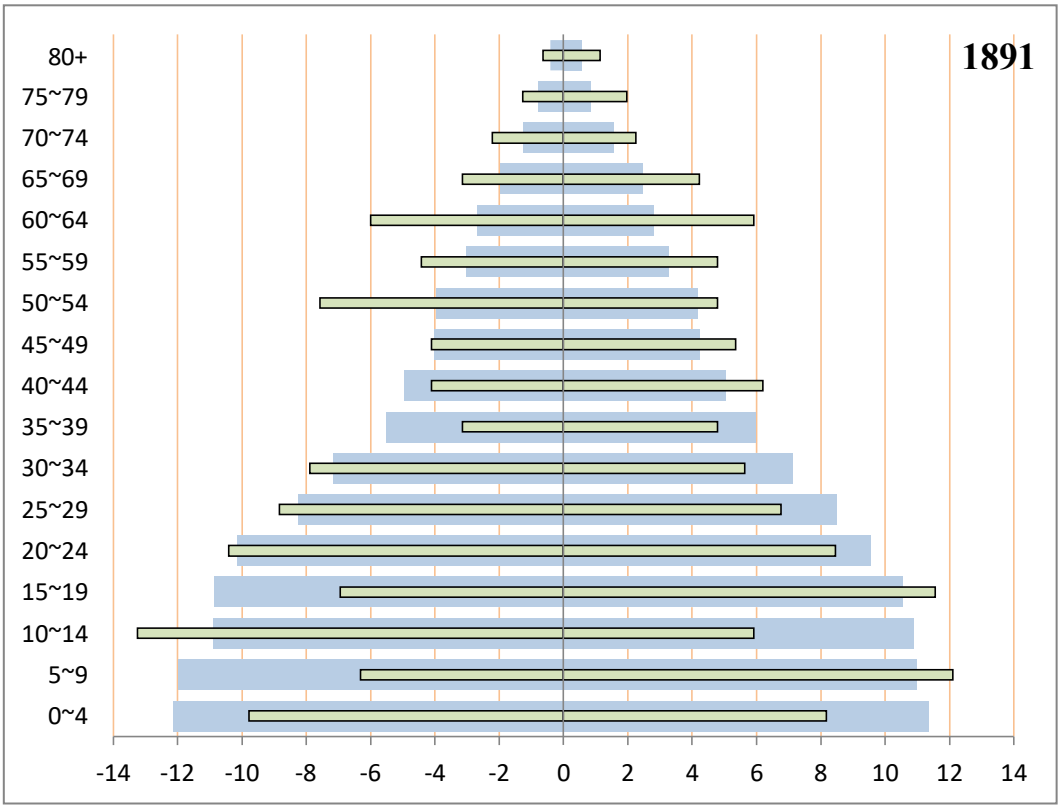
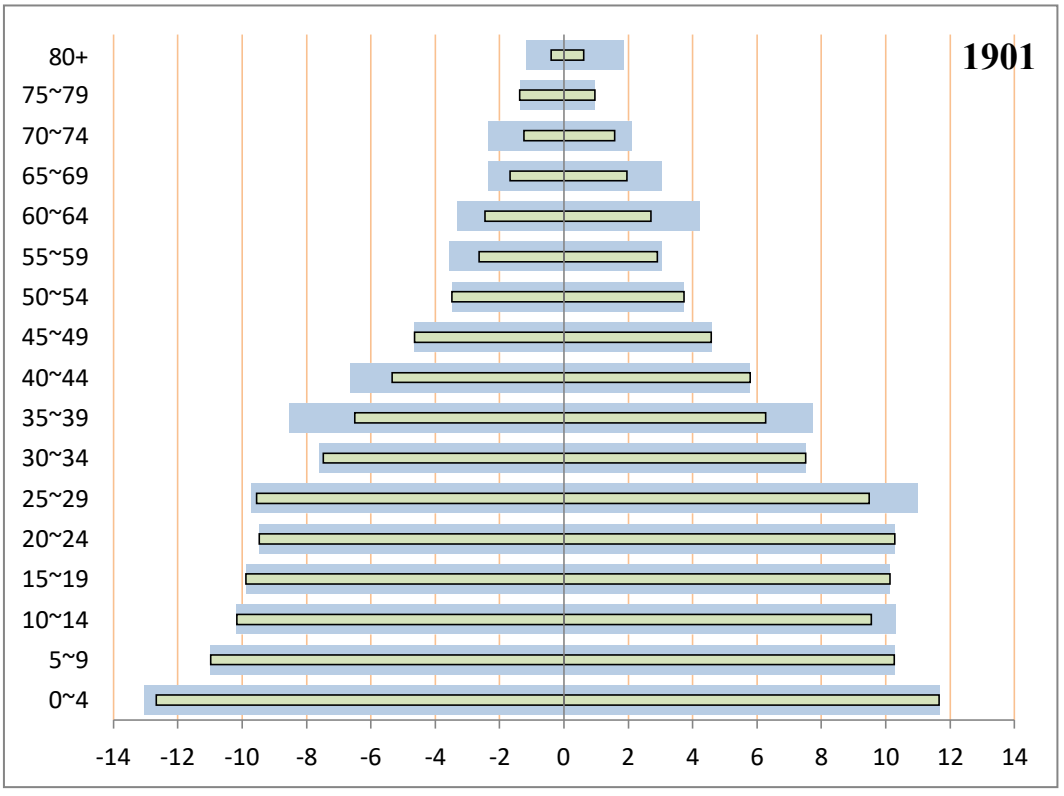

1901
80+
75~79
70~74
65~69
60~64
55~59
50~54
45~49
40~44
35~39
30~34
25~29
20~24
15~19
10~14
5~9
0~4
-14 -12 -10 -8 -6 -4 -2 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14

Figure 6.2 Age and Sex structure of the Coventry Host population and that of Irishcom 1871-1901




1891
80+
75~79
70~74
65~69
60~64
55~59
50~54
45~49
40~44
35~39
30~34
25~29
20~24
15~19
10~14
5~9
0~4
-14 -12 -10 -8 -6 -4 -2 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14


1901
80+
75~79
70~74
65~69
60~64
55~59
50~54
45~49
40~44
35~39
30~34
25~29
20~24
15~19
10~14
5~9
0~4
-14 -12 -10 -8 -6 -4 -2 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14

Chapter 2 Images

Figure 2.1 Hillfields

Figure 2.2 Thomas Street

Figure 2.3 Looking west from St. Michael's c 1930. This evocative city centre roof-top view captures density little changed from the nineteenth century, and the mixed residential, industrial, and commercial land use. The square towered church of St. John is visible in the centre distance, the steeple of St. Osburg's in the right background, and the imposing Rudge Whitworth building in the left background.

Figure 2.4 Craner's Road

Figure 2.5 Northumberland Road

Chapter 3 Images

Figure 3.9 Soup Kitchen in St. Mary's 1861[1]

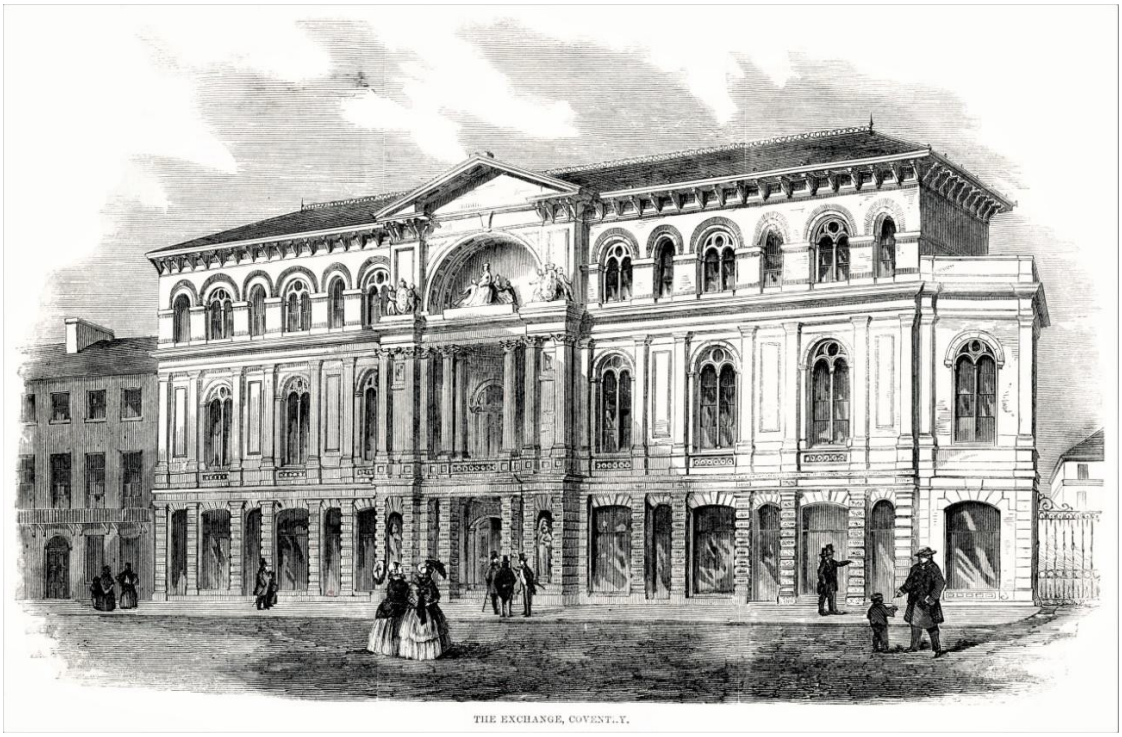


Figure 3.10 Corn Exchange Coventry, designed by Irish-born James Murray[2]

Chapter 4 Images

[1] Wellcome Collection.CC BY

[2] The *Illustrated London News* 10th July 1858 p. 37 © Illustrated London News/Mary Evans

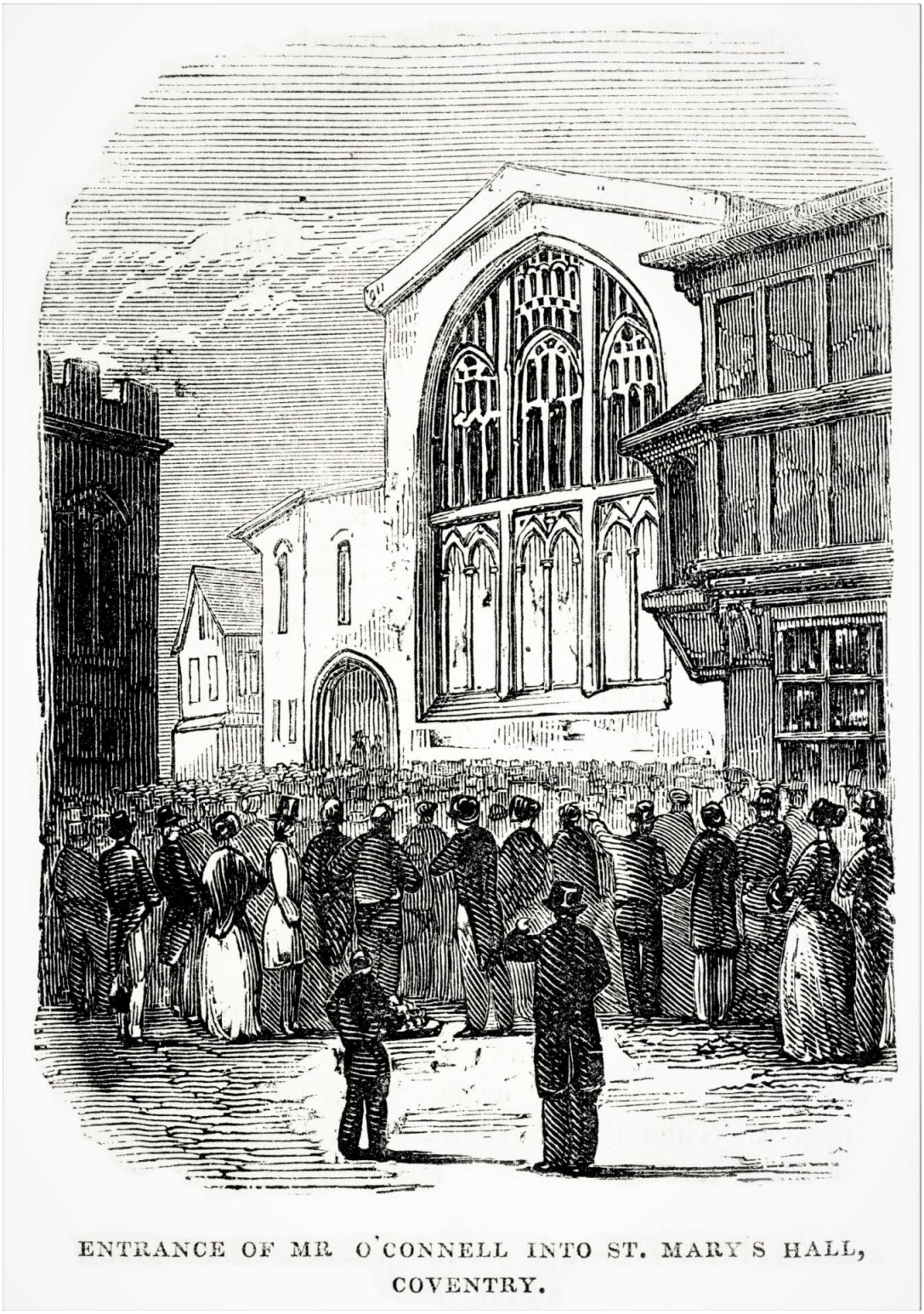


Figure 4.1 Entrance of Mr O'Connell (1775-1847) into St. Mary's Hall, Coventry for a meeting to 'consider the grievances of Ireland', 1844[3]

[3] Ibid., 23rd March 1844 p. 181 © Illustrated London News/Mary Evans

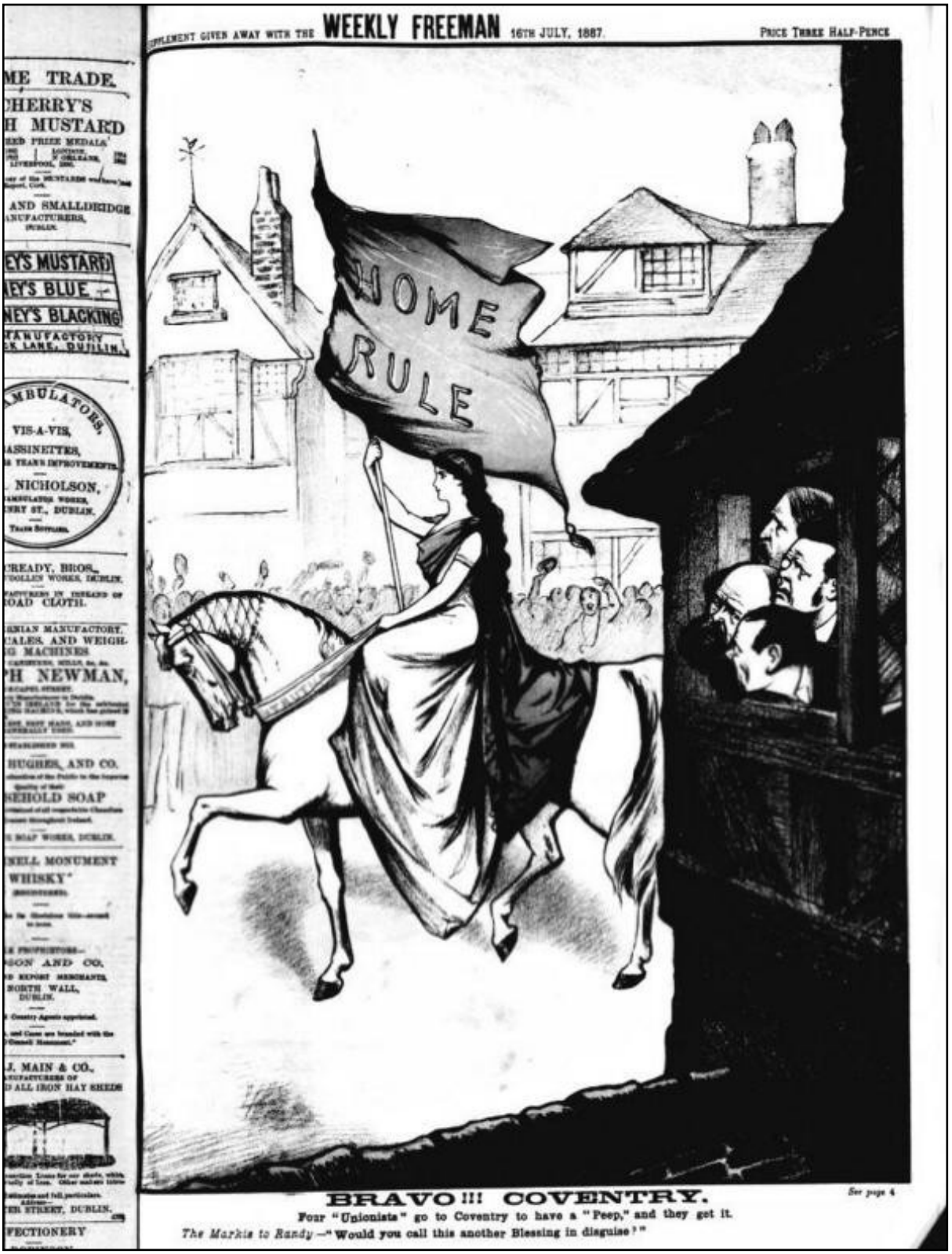
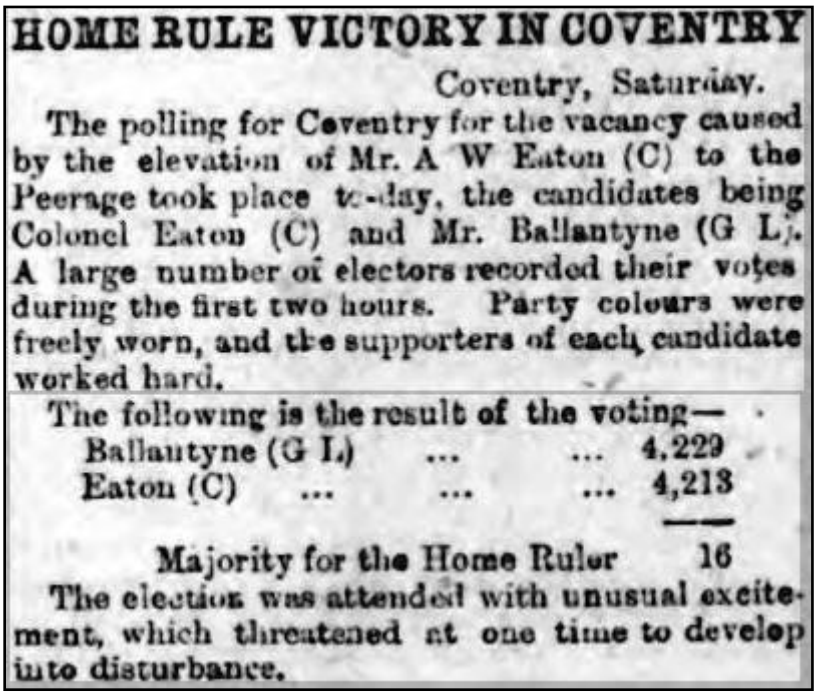


Figure 4.2 Bravo! Coventry. ***Weekly Freeman's Journal*** **16th July 1887**[4]

[4] *Weekly Freeman's Journal* 16th July 1887



HOME RULE VICTORY IN COVENTRY

Coventry, Saturday.

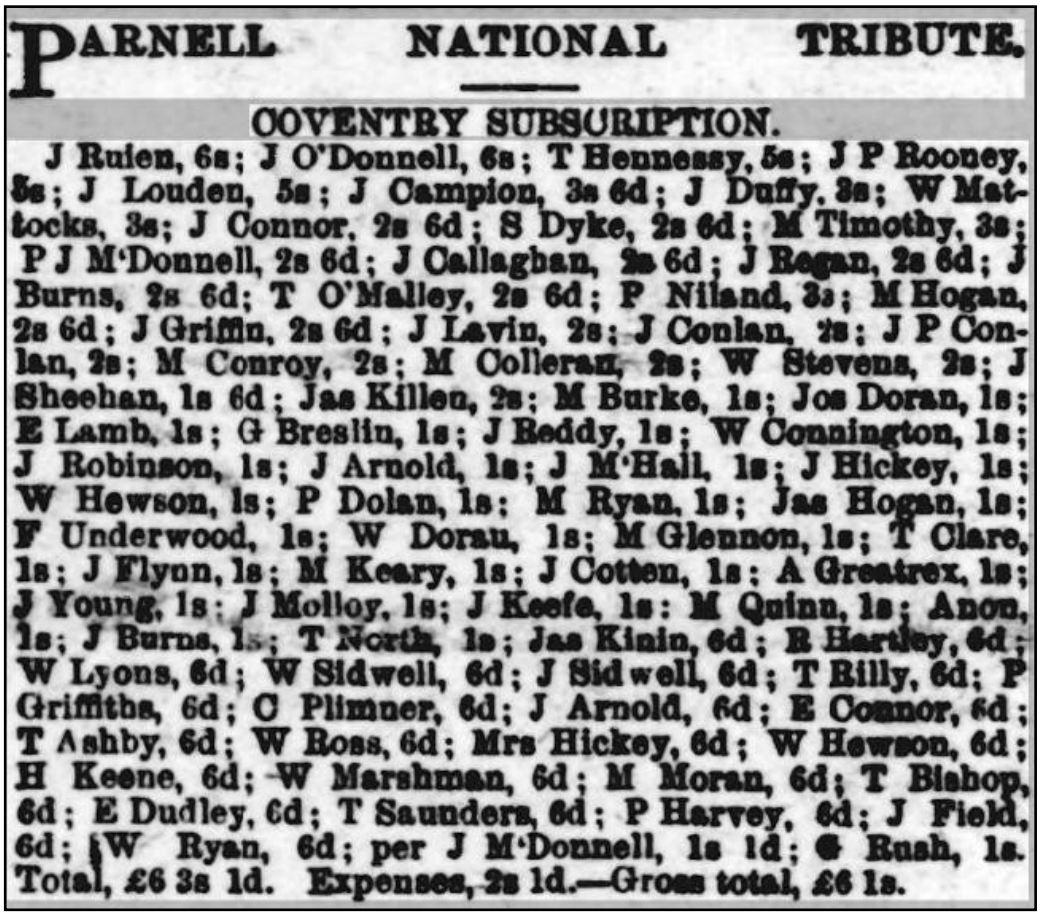
The polling for Coventry for the vacancy caused by the elevation of Mr. A W Eaton (C) to the Peerage took place to-day, the candidates being Colonel Eaton (C) and Mr. Ballantyne (G L). A large number of electors recorded their votes during the first two hours. Party colours were freely worn, and the supporters of each candidate worked hard.

The following is the result of the voting—

Ballantyne (G L)	...	...	4,229
Eaton (C)	...	...	4,213
Majority for the Home Ruler			16

The election was attended with unusual excitement, which threatened at one time to develop into disturbance.

Figure 4.3 Home Rule victory in Coventry. The tight result and the claimed impact of the 'Coventry Irish' vote.
***Weekly Freeman's Journal* 16th July 1887**[5]



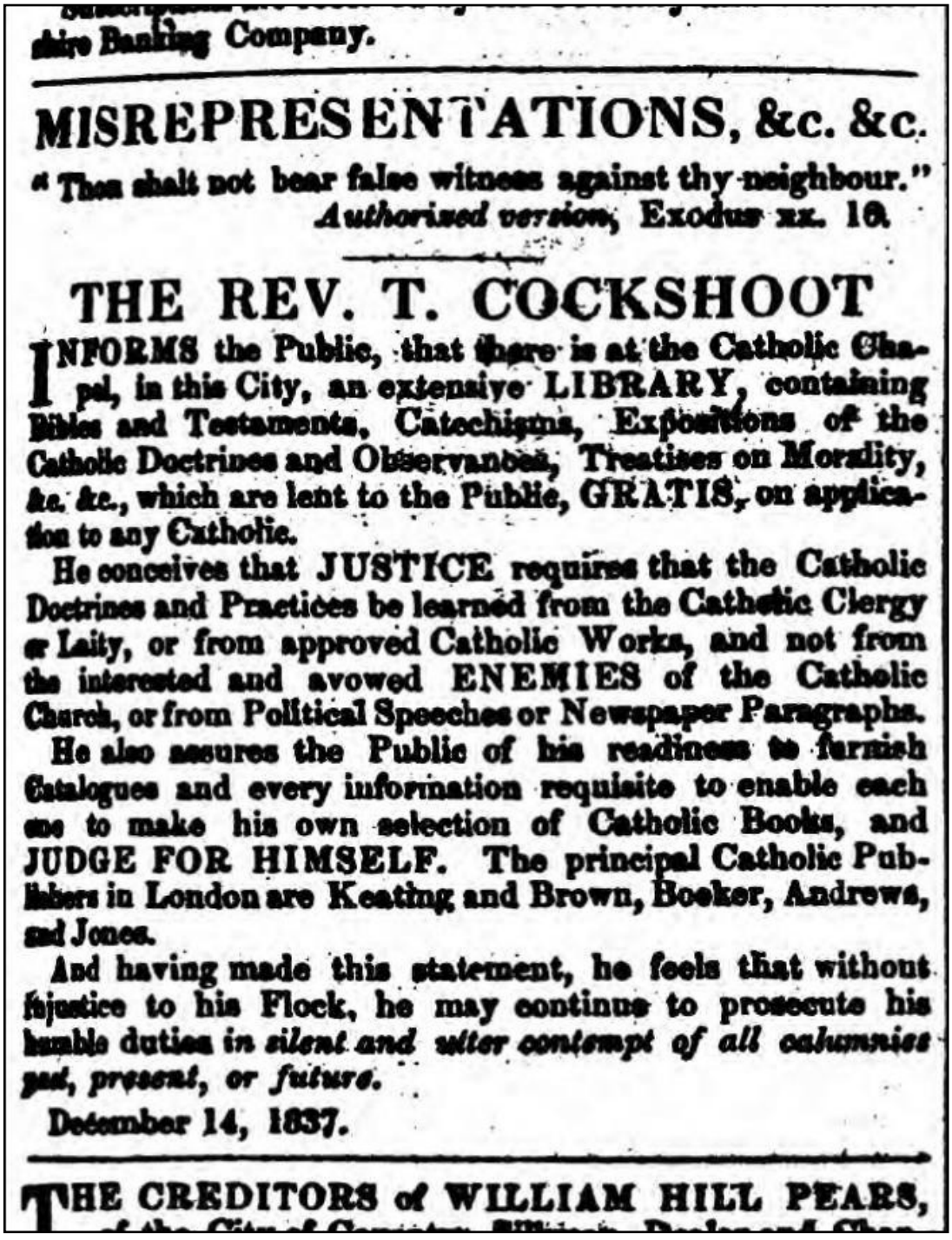
PARNELL NATIONAL TRIBUTE.

COVENTRY SUBSCRIPTION.

J Ruien, 6s; J O'Donnell, 6s; T Hennessy, 5s; J P Rooney, 5s; J Louden, 5s; J Campion, 3s 6d; J Duffy, 3s; W Mattocks, 3s; J Connor, 2s 6d; S Dyke, 2s 6d; M Timothy, 3s; P J M'Donnell, 2s 6d; J Callaghan, 2s 6d; J Regan, 2s 6d; J Burns, 2s 6d; T O'Malley, 2s 6d; P Niland, 3s; M Hogan, 2s 6d; J Griffin, 2s 6d; J Lavin, 2s; J Conlan, 2s; J P Conlan, 2s; M Conroy, 2s; M Colleran, 2s; W Stevens, 2s; J Sheehan, 1s 6d; Jas Killen, 2s; M Burke, 1s; Jos Doran, 1s; E Lamb, 1s; G Breslin, 1s; J Reddy, 1s; W Connington, 1s; J Robinson, 1s; J Arnold, 1s; J M'Hall, 1s; J Hickey, 1s; W Hewson, 1s; P Dolan, 1s; M Ryan, 1s; Jas Hogan, 1s; F Underwood, 1s; W Doran, 1s; M Glennon, 1s; T Clare, 1s; J Flynn, 1s; M Keary, 1s; J Cotten, 1s; A Greatrex, 1s; J Young, 1s; J Molloy, 1s; J Keefe, 1s; M Quinn, 1s; Anon, 1s; J Burns, 1s; T North, 1s; Jas Kinin, 6d; R Hartley, 6d; W Lyons, 6d; W Sidwell, 6d; J Sidwell, 6d; T Rilly, 6d; P Griffiths, 6d; C Plimmer, 6d; J Arnold, 6d; E Connor, 6d; T Ashby, 6d; W Ross, 6d; Mrs Hickey, 6d; W Hewson, 6d; H Keene, 6d; W Marshman, 6d; M Moran, 6d; T Bishop, 6d; E Dudley, 6d; T Saunders, 6d; P Harvey, 6d; J Field, 6d; W Ryan, 6d; per J M'Donnell, 1s 1d; C Rush, 1s. Total, £6 3s 1d. Expenses, 2s 1d.—Gross total, £6 1s.

Figure 4.4 Coventry Subscribers to the Parnell National Tribute
***Dublin Weekly Nation* 8th December 1883**[6]

[5] Ibid.



shire Banking Company.

MISREPRESENTATIONS, &c. &c.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."
Authorised version, Exodus xx. 16.

THE REV. T. COCKSHOOT

INFORMS the Public, that there is at the Catholic Chapel, in this City, an extensive LIBRARY, containing Bibles and Testaments, Catechisms, Expositions of the Catholic Doctrines and Observances, Treatises on Morality, &c. &c., which are lent to the Public, GRATIS, on application to any Catholic.

He conceives that JUSTICE requires that the Catholic Doctrines and Practices be learned from the Catholic Clergy or Laity, or from approved Catholic Works, and not from the interested and avowed ENEMIES of the Catholic Church, or from Political Speeches or Newspaper Paragraphs.

He also assures the Public of his readiness to furnish Catalogues and every information requisite to enable each one to make his own selection of Catholic Books, and JUDGE FOR HIMSELF. The principal Catholic Publishers in London are Keating and Brown, Booker, Andrews, and Jones.

And having made this statement, he feels that without injustice to his Flock, he may continue to prosecute his humble duties *in silent and utter contempt of all calumnies past, present, or future.*

December 14, 1837.

THE CREDITORS of WILLIAM HILL PEARS,

Figure 4.5 Cockshoot's reply to those who said Catholics had to accept his Church's scriptural interpretation without demur. *Coventry Herald* 15th December 1837[7]

[6] Newspaper image © The British Library Board. All rights reserved. With thanks to The British Newspaper Archive (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk).

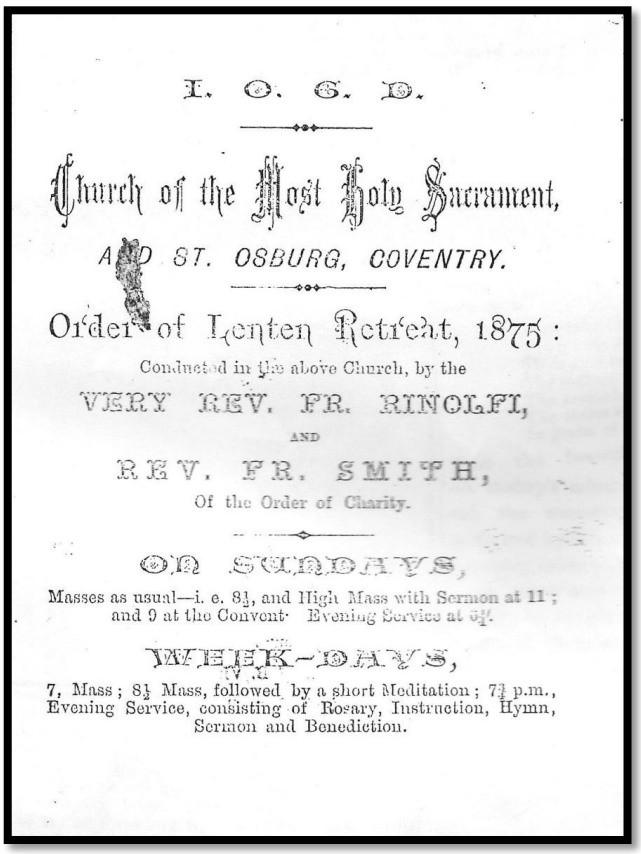
[7] Ibid.

Figure 4.6 St. Osburg's 1910 with Priory to the right and schools to the left[8]

Figure 4.7 St. Mary & St. Benedict, Raglan Street as seen from Hood Street [9]

[8] Contemporary postcard

[9] http://s0.geograph.org.uk/geophotos/03/57/71/3577101_67699fb4.jpg image by David Dixon and transformed to monochrome



I. O. G. D.

Church of the Most Holy Sacrament,

AND ST. OSBURG, COVENTRY.

Order of Lenten Retreat, 1875:

Conducted in the above Church, by the

VERY REV. FR. RINOLFI,

AND

REV. FR. SMITH,

Of the Order of Charity.

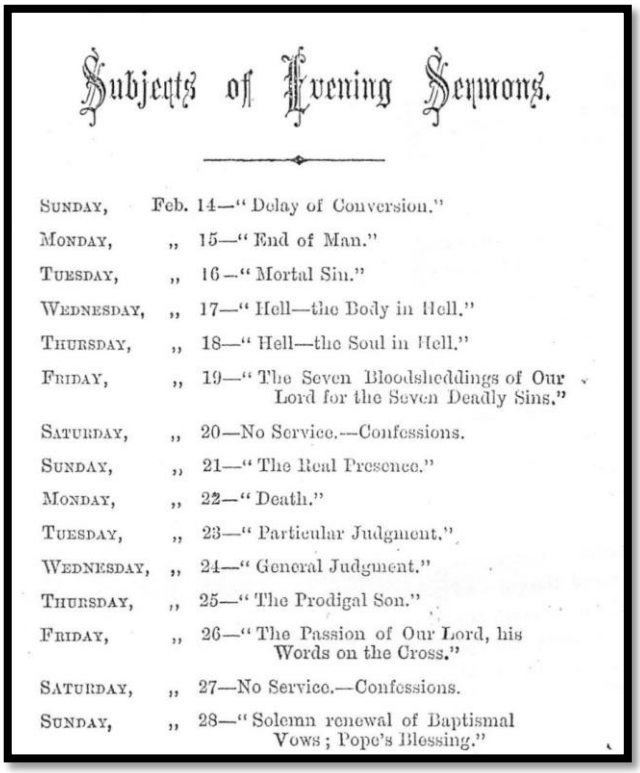
ON SUNDAYS,

Masses as usual—i. e. 8½, and High Mass with Sermon at 11; and 9 at the Convent. Evening Service at 6½.

WEEK-DAYS,

7, Mass; 8½ Mass, followed by a short Meditation; 7½ p.m., Evening Service, consisting of Rosary, Instruction, Hymn, Sermon and Benediction.

Figure 4.8 Lenten Retreat Programme St. Osburg's 1875[10]



Subjects of Evening Sermons.

SUNDAY,	Feb. 14—	"Delay of Conversion."
MONDAY,	„ 15—	"End of Man."
TUESDAY,	„ 16—	"Mortal Sin."
WEDNESDAY,	„ 17—	"Hell—the Body in Hell."
THURSDAY,	„ 18—	"Hell—the Soul in Hell."
FRIDAY,	„ 19—	"The Seven Bloodsheddings of Our Lord for the Seven Deadly Sins."
SATURDAY,	„ 20—	No Service.—Confessions.
SUNDAY,	„ 21—	"The Real Presence."
MONDAY,	„ 22—	"Death."
TUESDAY,	„ 23—	"Particular Judgment."
WEDNESDAY,	„ 24—	"General Judgment."
THURSDAY,	„ 25—	"The Prodigal Son."
FRIDAY,	„ 26—	"The Passion of Our Lord, his Words on the Cross."
SATURDAY,	„ 27—	No Service.—Confessions.
SUNDAY,	„ 28—	"Solemn renewal of Baptismal Vows; Pope's Blessing."

Figure 4.8 Reverse of Retreat Programme

[10] Coventry History Centre, Herbert Art Gallery and Museum

Figure 4.9 Denis Ignatius McVeagh 1824-1913, Medical Officer at the Dispensary from 1853-1909[11]

[11] Ibid.

Figure 4.10 Bishop William Bernard Ullathorne 1801-889[12]

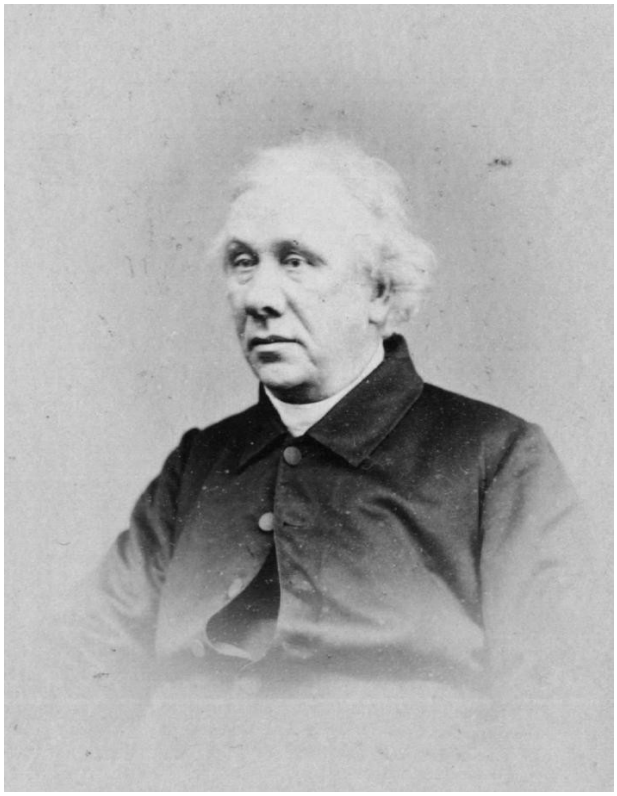


Figure 4.11 Father Ralph Ephrem Pratt 1802-1875[13]

[12] http://www.pocklingtonhistory.com/archives/people/famous/williamullathorne/index.php
[13] Archives of Downside Abbey

Figure 4.12 Father Henry Edmund Moore. 1824-1899[14]

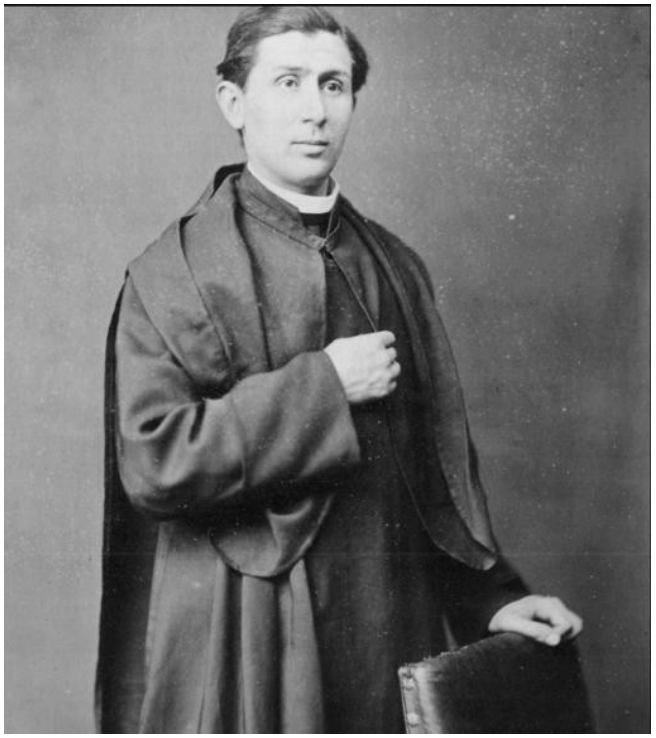


Figure 4.13 Father Antonio Francisco Pereira 1839-1923[15]

[14] *The Downside Review* Vol. 18, 1899 p. 179
[15] Archives of Downside Abbey

Figure 4.14 Father Richard Placid Rea 1851-1915[16]

Figure 4.15 Father Henry Norbert Birt 1861-1919[17]

[16] *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 11th January 1915
[17] https://www.flickr.com/photos/downsideabbeyarchives/14826792442/in/album-72157645761489100/

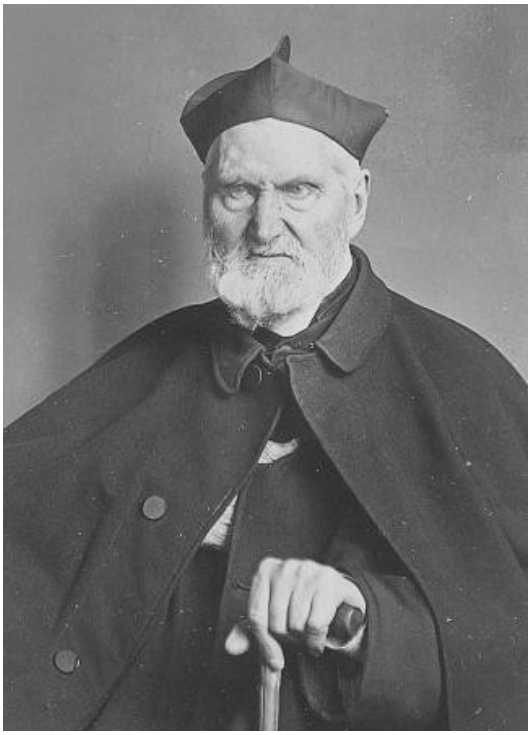


Figure 4.16 Dom Michael Placid Sinnott 1803-1896[18]

[18] Archives of Downside Abbey

Chapter 5 Image

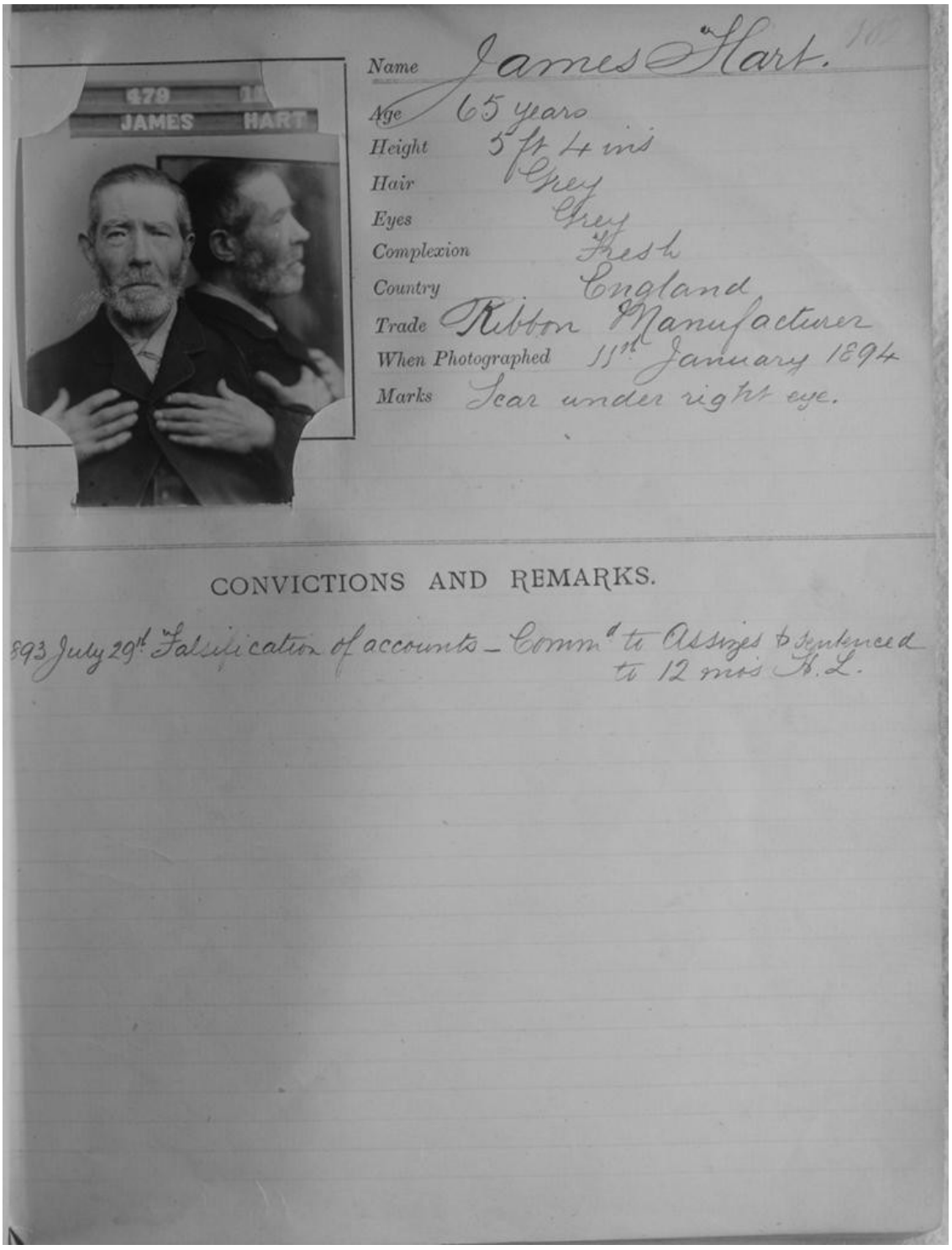


Figure 5.3 Taken in ignominious circumstances, an exceptionally rare, if not unique, image of James Hart, 1829-1915.[19]

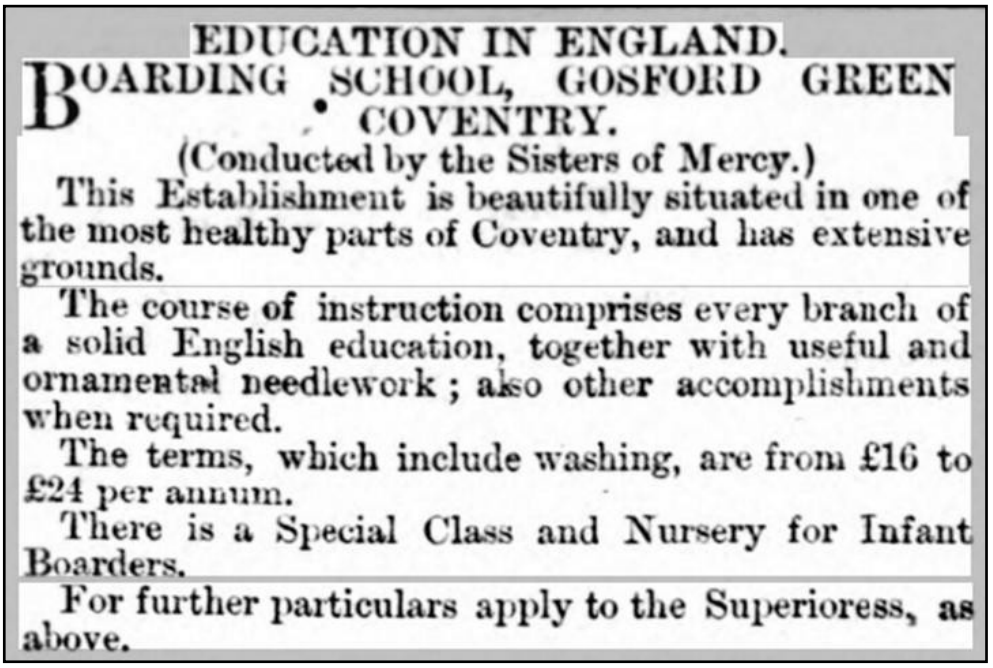
[19] Coventry History Centre, Herbert Art Gallery and Museum

Appendix 2 Image

Figure A.2.1 The work of John Rogers[20]

[20] © Stevengraph-Silks.com. By kind permission of the website owner

Appendix 11 Image



EDUCATION IN ENGLAND.

BOARDING SCHOOL, GOSFORD GREEN COVENTRY.

(Conducted by the Sisters of Mercy.)

This Establishment is beautifully situated in one of the most healthy parts of Coventry, and has extensive grounds.

The course of instruction comprises every branch of a solid English education, together with useful and ornamental needlework; also other accomplishments when required.

The terms, which include washing, are from £16 to £24 per annum.

There is a Special Class and Nursery for Infant Boarders.

For further particulars apply to the Superioress, as above.

Figure A.11.1 An advertisement placed in the *Dublin Weekly Nation* on 3rd July, 14th & 21st August and 4th September 1869 seeking students from Ireland. It was most likely responsible for the Lynch children being educated in Coventry.[21]

[21] Newspaper image © The British Library Board. All rights reserved. With thanks to The British Newspaper Archive (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk).

Appendix 12 Image

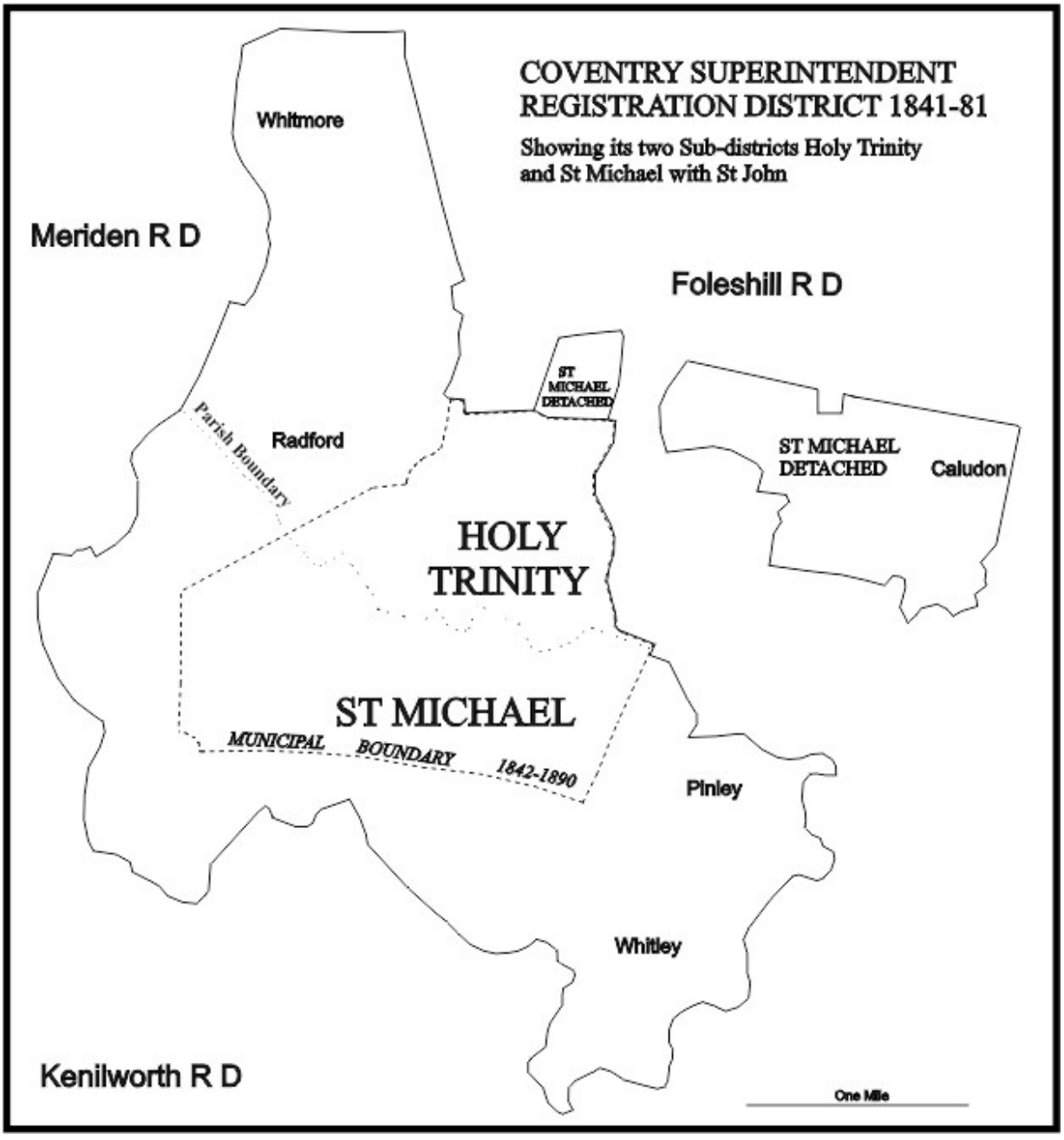
Figure A.12.2 Junction of Albert Street and AdelaideStreet[22]

[22] By permission of Historic England Archive, No: 7063

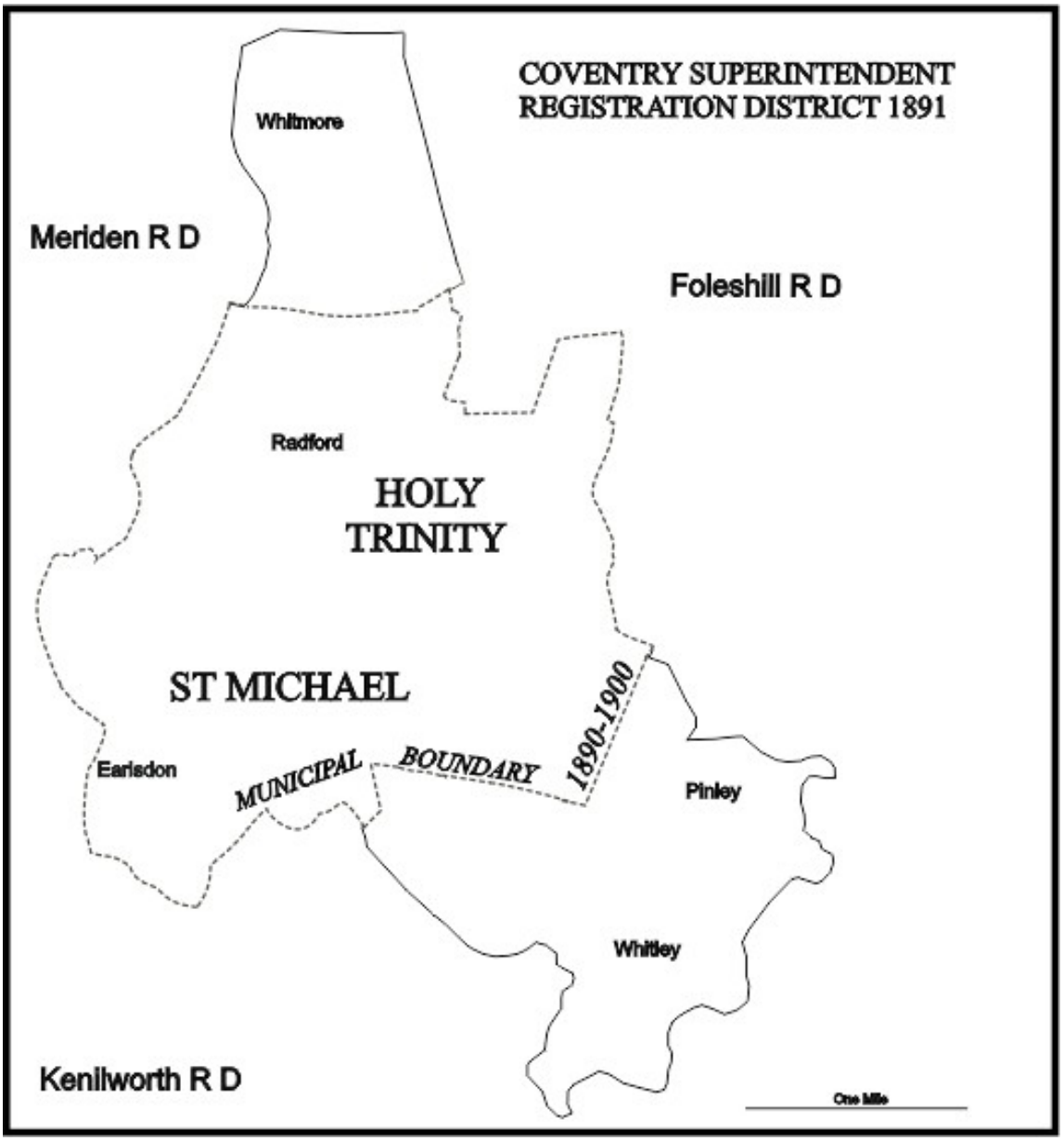
Appendix 20 Image

Figure A.20.1 13 and 15 Carmelite Road

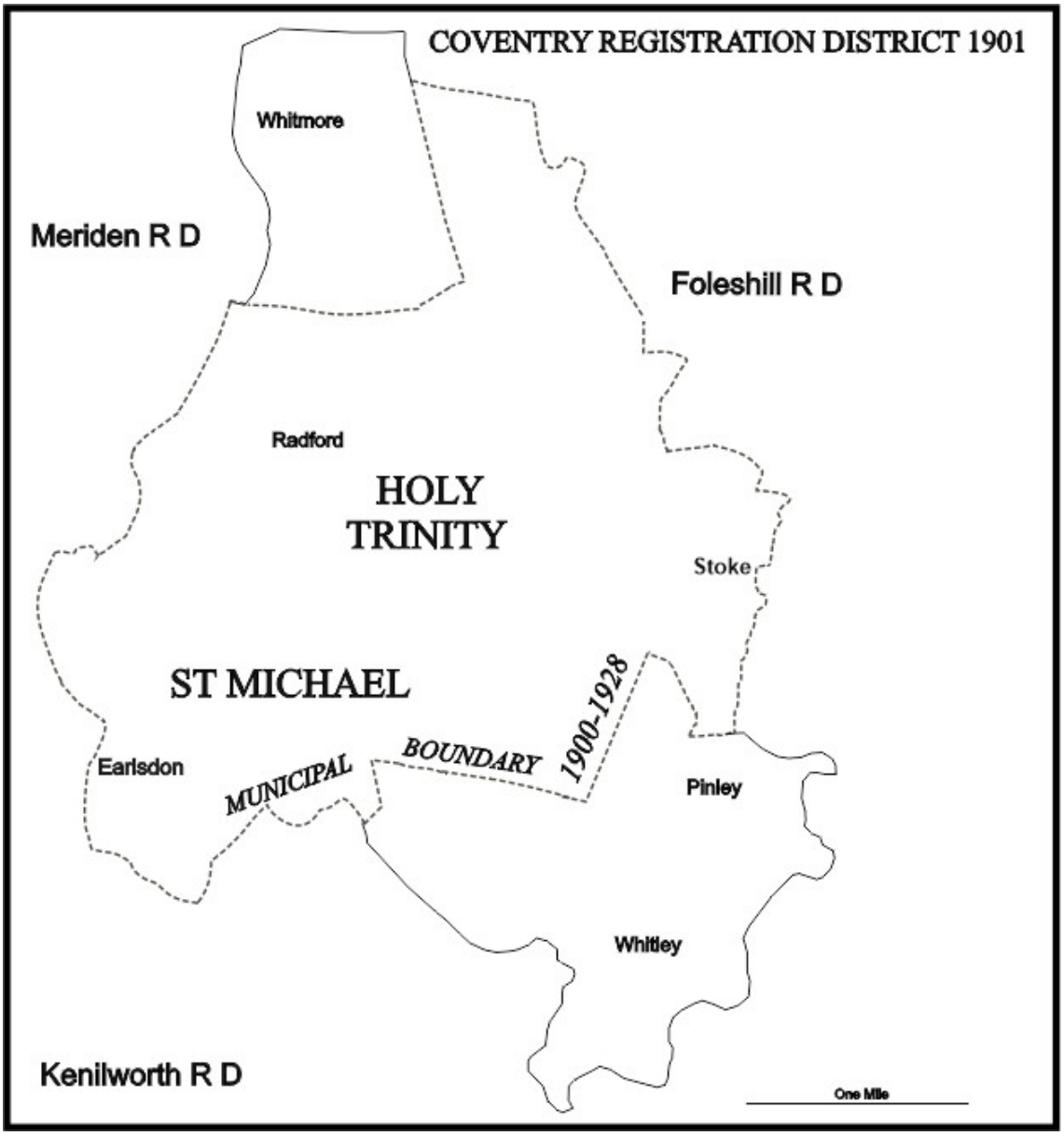
Chapter 1 Maps



Map 1.1

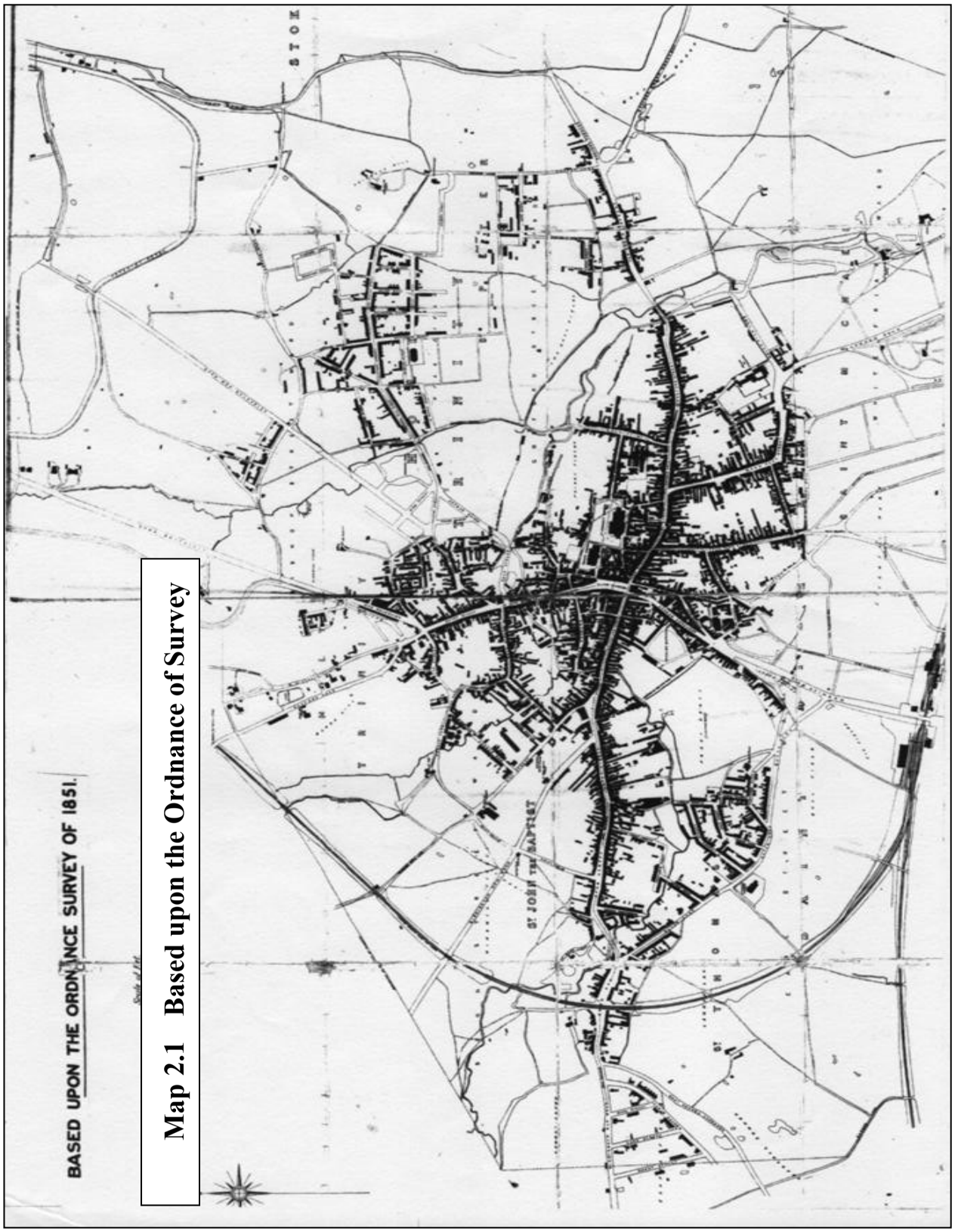

COVENTRY SUPERINTENDENT
REGISTRATION DISTRICT 1891
Whitmore
Meriden R D
Foleshill R D
Radford
HOLY
TRINITY
ST MICHAEL
1890-1900
MUNICIPAL
BOUNDARY
Earlsdon
Pinley
Whitley
Kenilworth R D
One Mile

Map 1.2

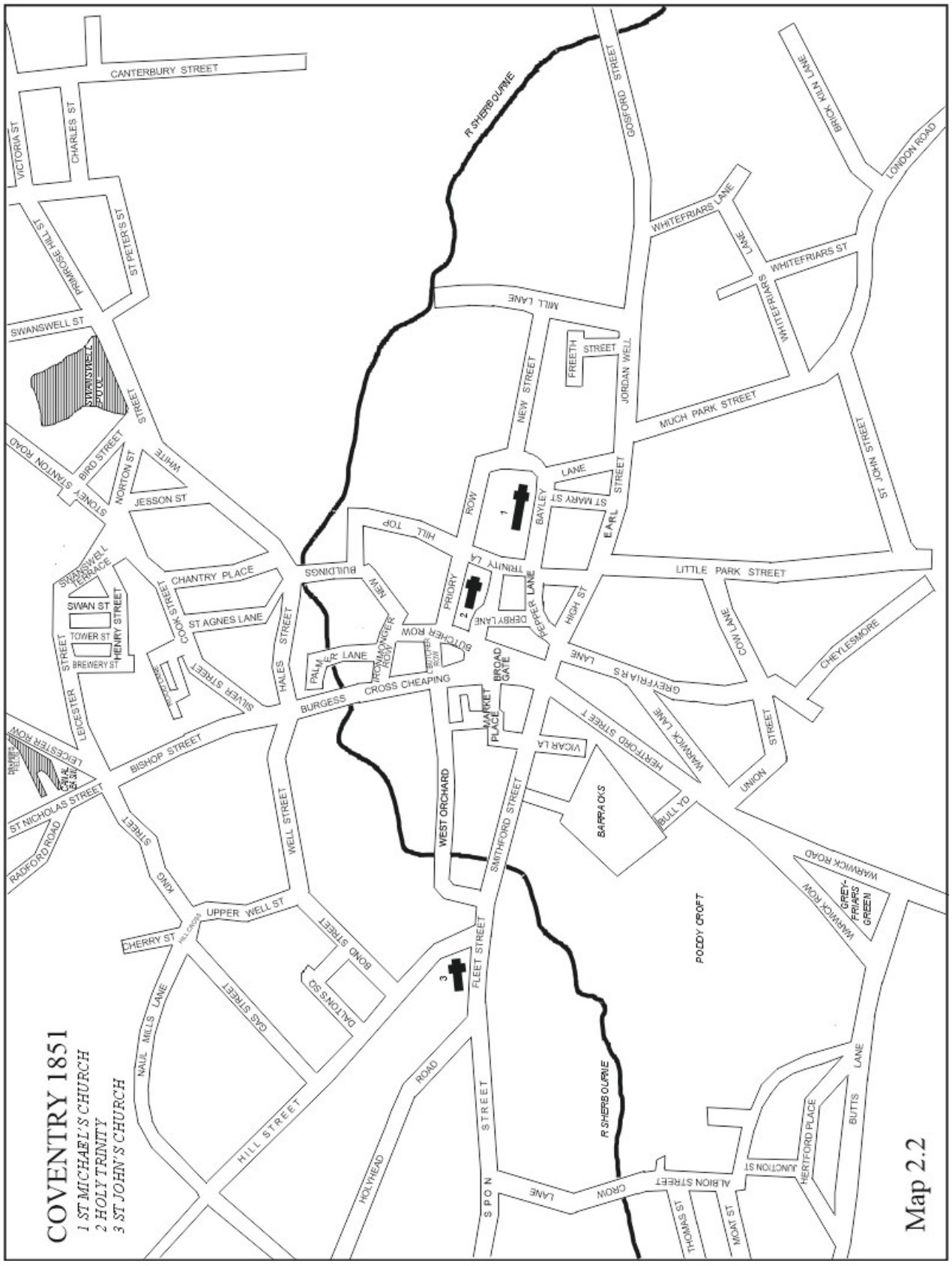

COVENTRY REGISTRATION DISTRICT 1901
Whitmore
Meriden R D
Foleshill R D
Radford
HOLY
TRINITY
Stoke
ST MICHAEL
1900-1928
BOUNDARY
MUNICIPAL
Earlsdon
Pinley
Whitley
Kenilworth R D
One Mile

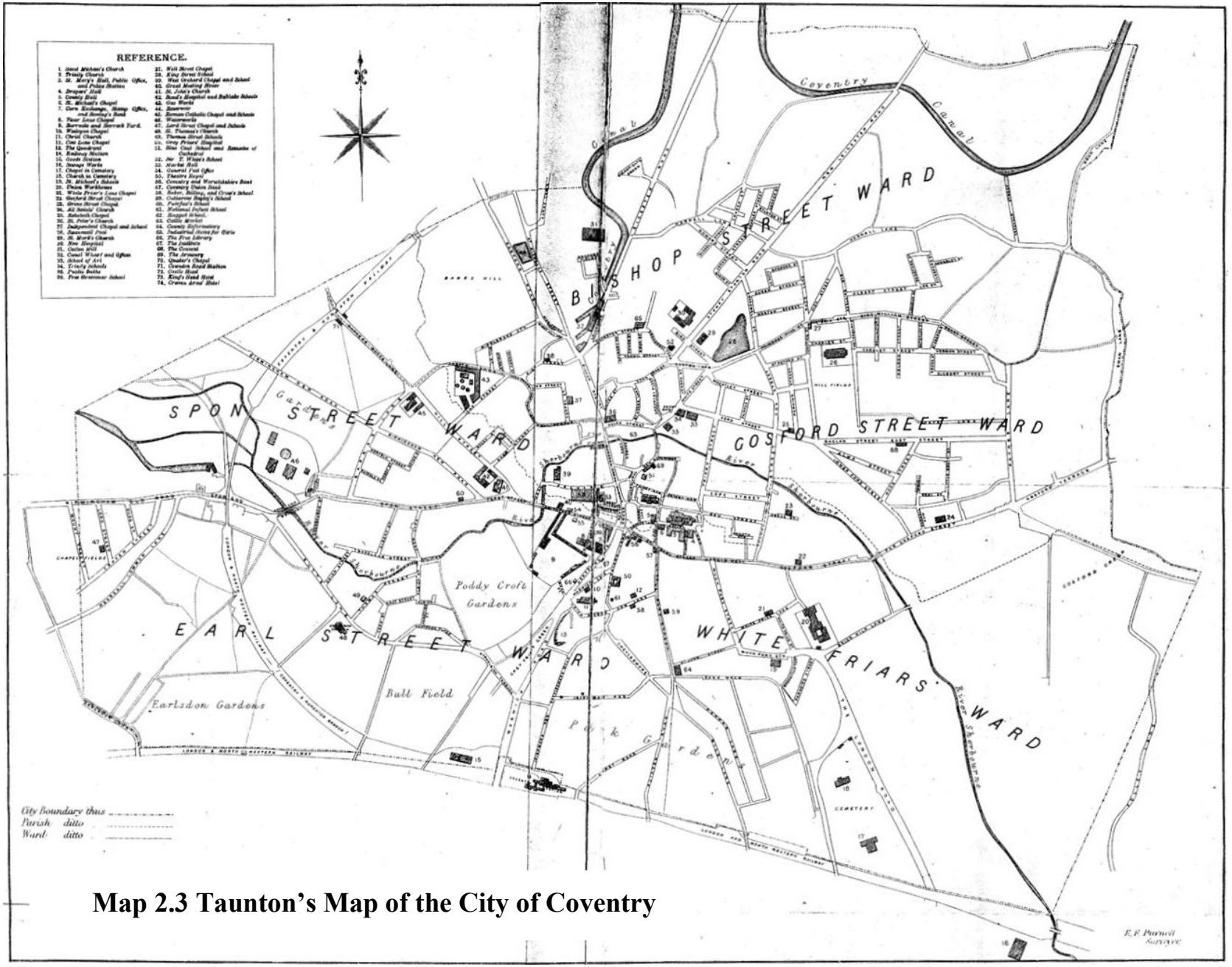
Map 1.3

Chapter 2 Maps

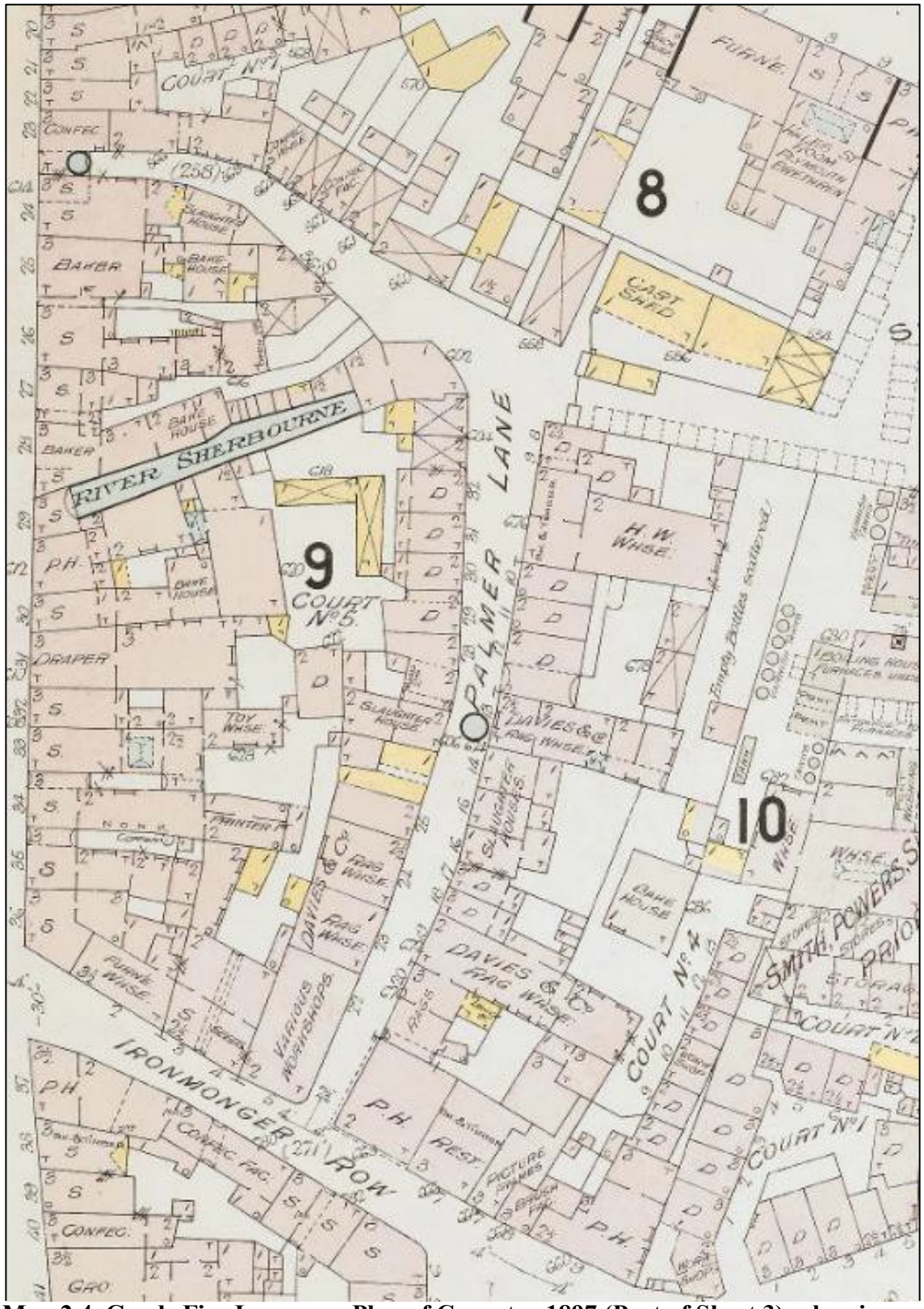


Map 2.1 Based upon the Ordnance of Survey


COVENTRY 1851
1 ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH
2 HOLY TRINITY
3 ST JOHN'S CHURCH
CANTERBURY STREET
VICTORIA ST
CHARLES ST
PARKHOSE HILL ST
ST PETER'S ST
SWANSWELL ST
SWANSWELL POOL
STONEY STANTON ROAD
BIRD STREET
NORTON ST
WHITE STREET
JESSON ST
SWANSWELL TERRACE
CHANTRY PLACE
SWAN ST
TOWER ST
BREWERY ST
HENRY STREET
COOK STREET
ST AGNES LANE
SILVER STREET
HALES STREET
LEICESTER STREET
LEICESTER ROW
BISHOP STREET
ST NICHOLAS STREET
RADFORD ROAD
KING STREET
CHERRY ST
UPPER WELL ST
WELL STREET
BOND STREET
DALTON'S SQ
GAS STREET
NAUL MILLS LANE
HILL STREET
HOLYHEAD ROAD
SPON STREET
FLEET STREET
WEST ORCHARD
SMITHFORD STREET
BARRACKS
BULL YD
VICAR LA
MARKET PLACE
BROAD GATE
HERTFORD STREET
WARWICK LANE
GREYFRIARS LANE
UNION STREET
COW LANE
CHEYLESMORE
WARWICK ROW
GREY-FRIARS GREEN
WARWICK ROAD
POLDY CROFT
R SHERBOURNE
GOSFORD STREET
BRICK KILN LANE
LONDON ROAD
WHITEFRIARS LANE
WHITEFRIARS ST
MILL LANE
NEW STREET
FREETH STREET
JORDAN WELL
MUCH PARK STREET
ST JOHN STREET
LITTLE PARK STREET
EARL STREET
ST MARY ST
BAYLEY LANE
ROW
HILL TOP
BUILDINGS
NEW
PRIORY
TRINITY LA
DERBY LANE
PEPPER LANE
HIGH ST
BUTCHER ROW
IRONMONGER ROW
LEATHER SQ
PALMER LANE
BURGESS
CROSS CHEAPING
ALBION STREET
CROW LANE
JUNCTION ST
HERTFORD PLACE
BUTTS LANE
THOMAS ST
MOAT ST
Map 2.2

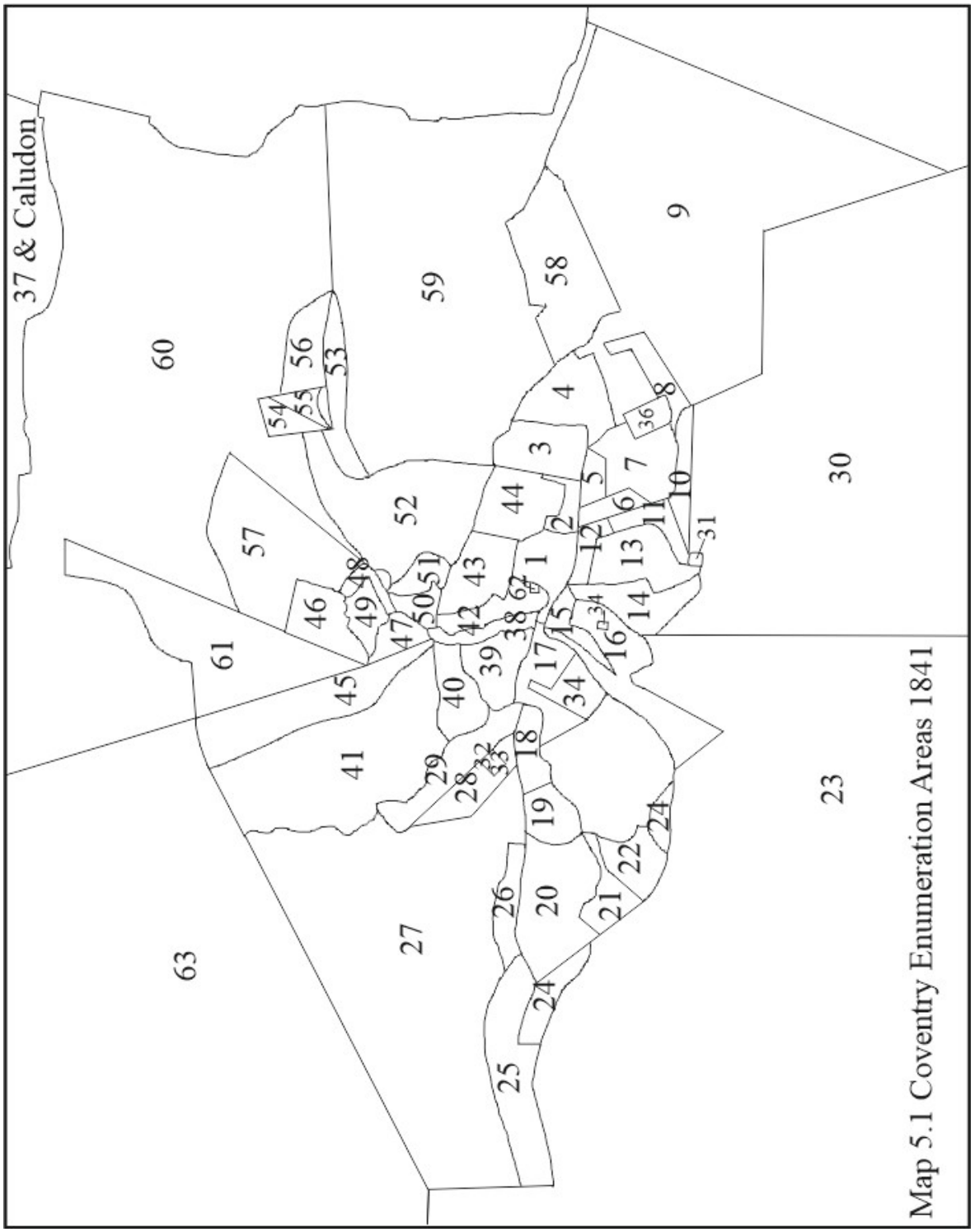


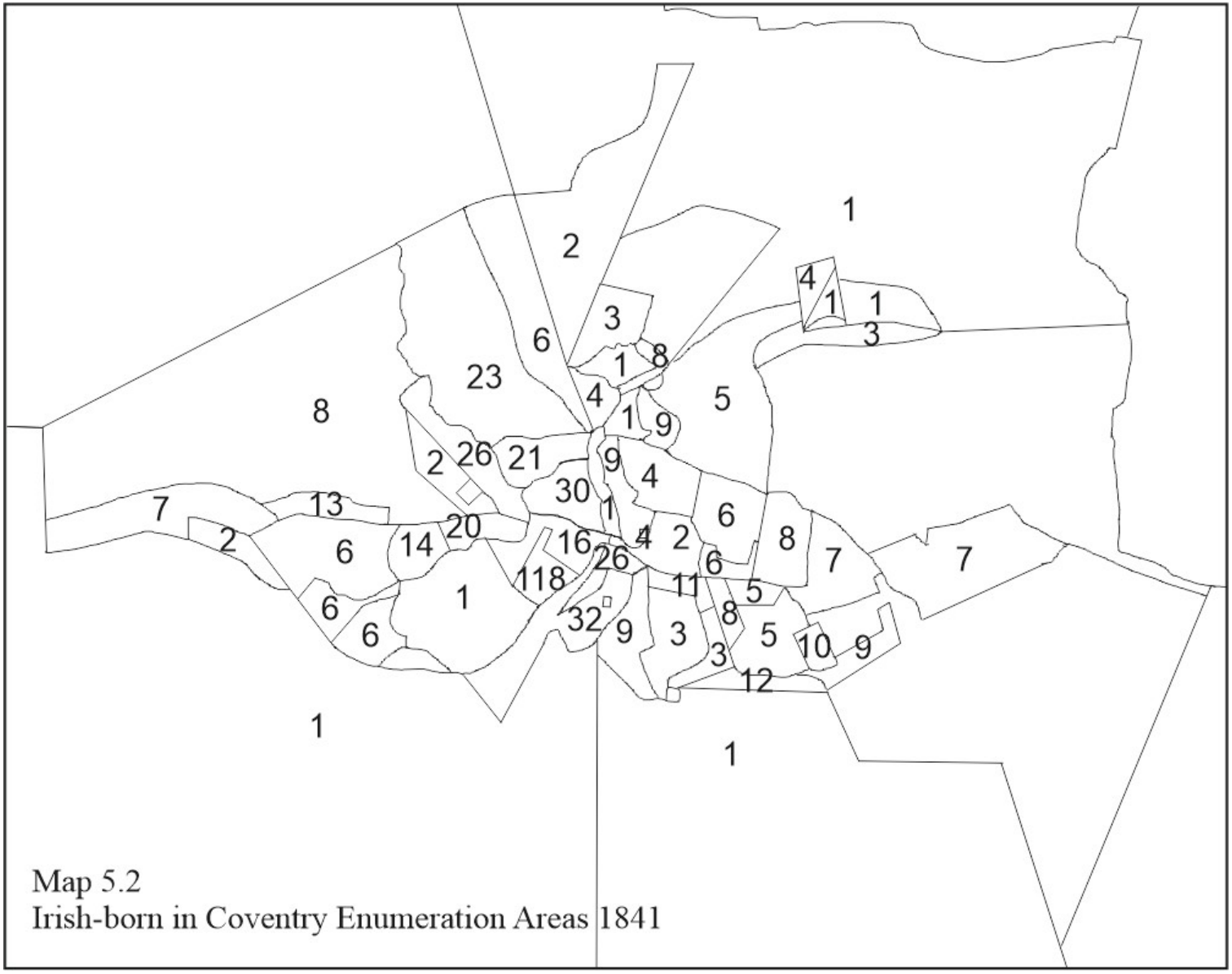
Map 2.3 Taunton's Map of the City of Coventry



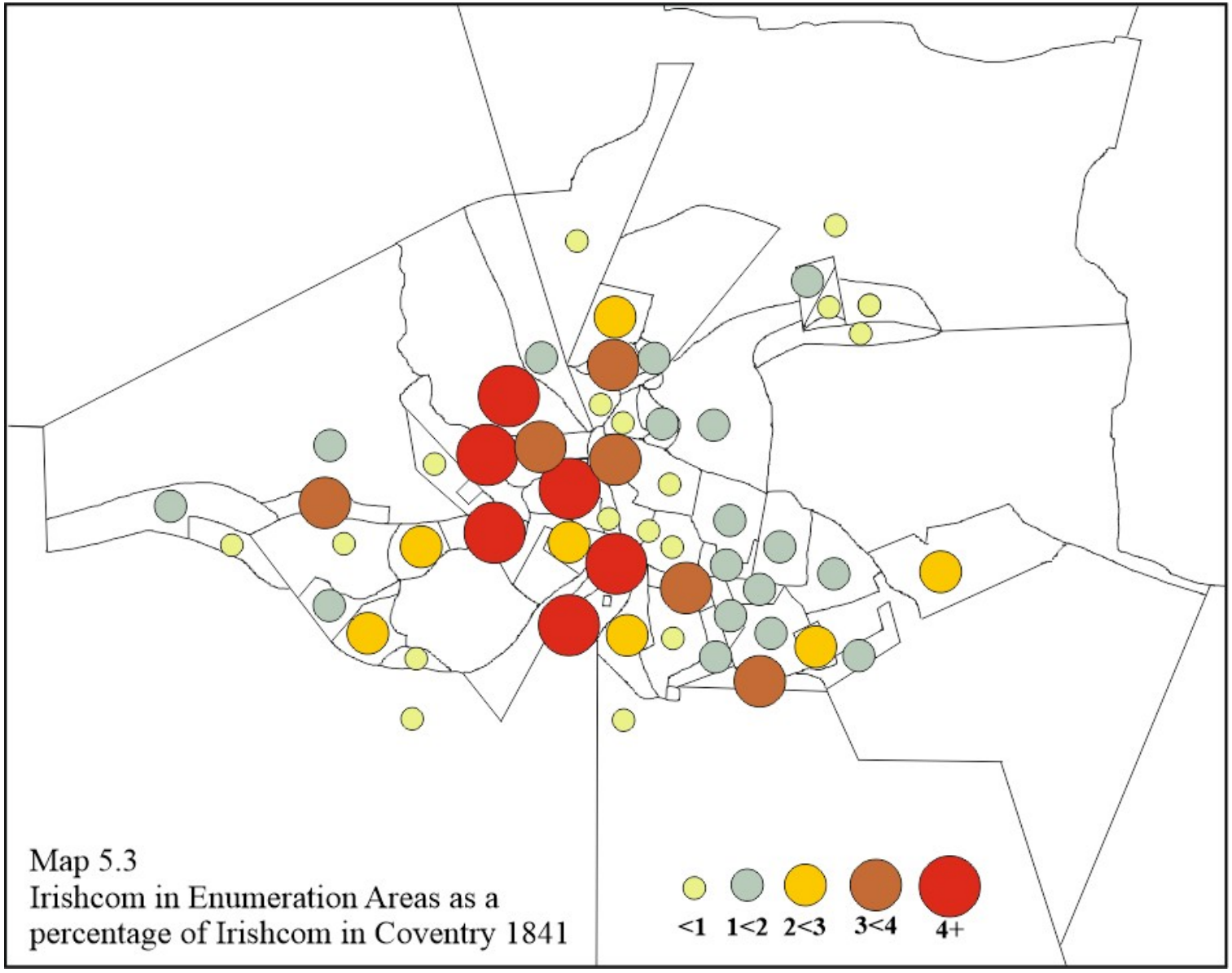
Map 2.4. Goads Fire Insurance Plan of Coventry 1897 (Part of Sheet 3), showing high density mixed land-use, and the unhealthy environs of Palmer Lane which included slaughter houses.

Chapter 5 Maps

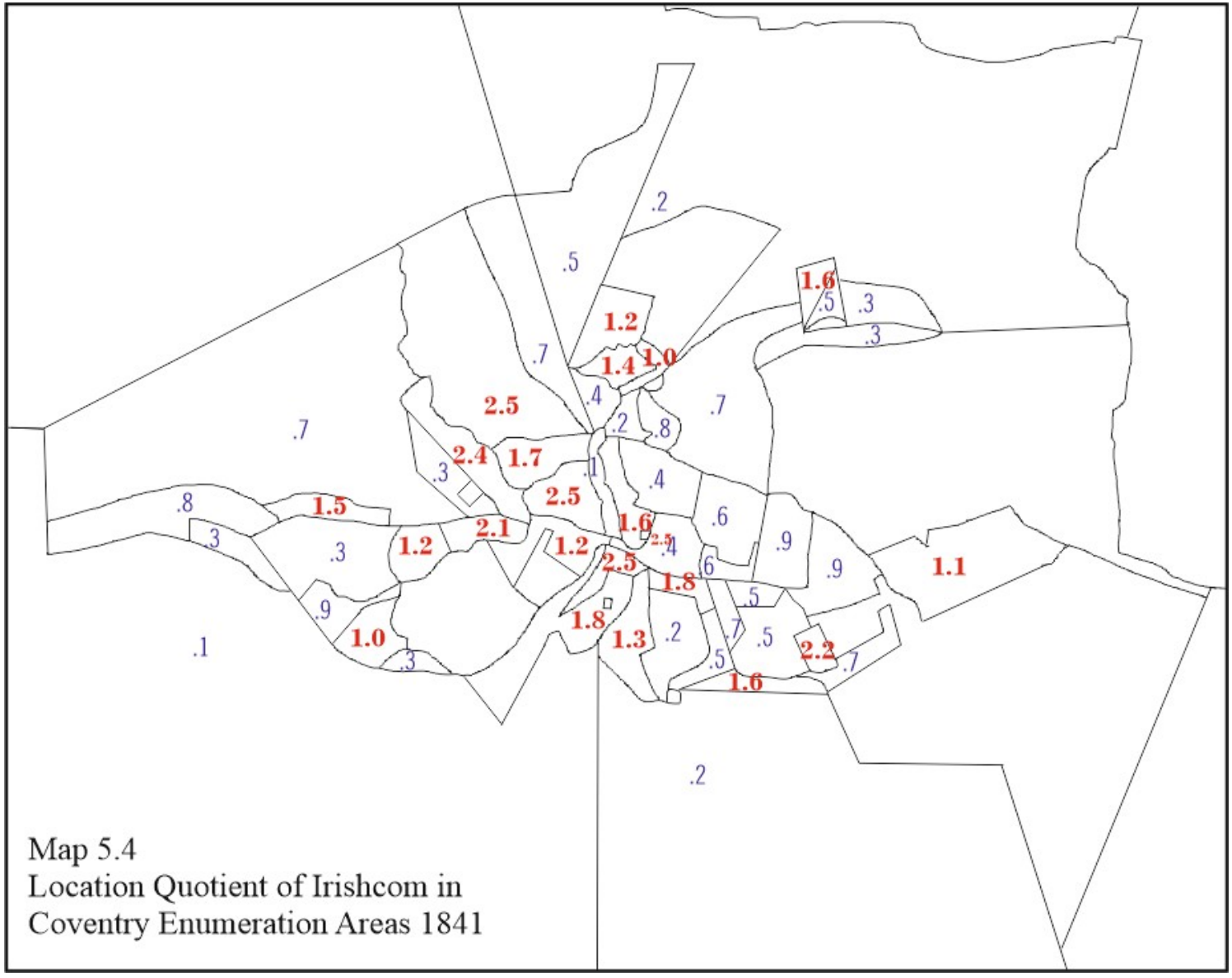




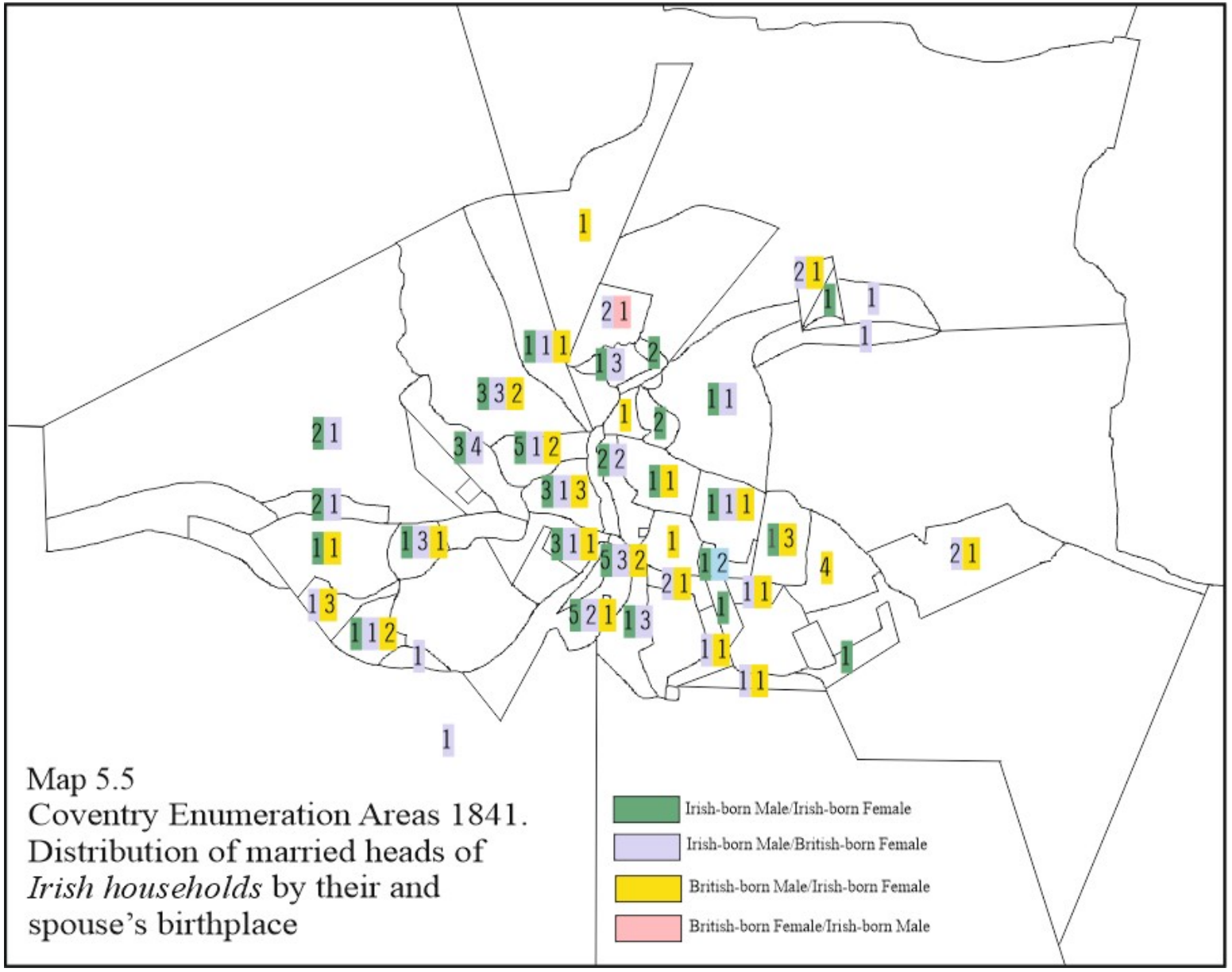
Map 5.2
Irish-born in Coventry Enumeration Areas 1841



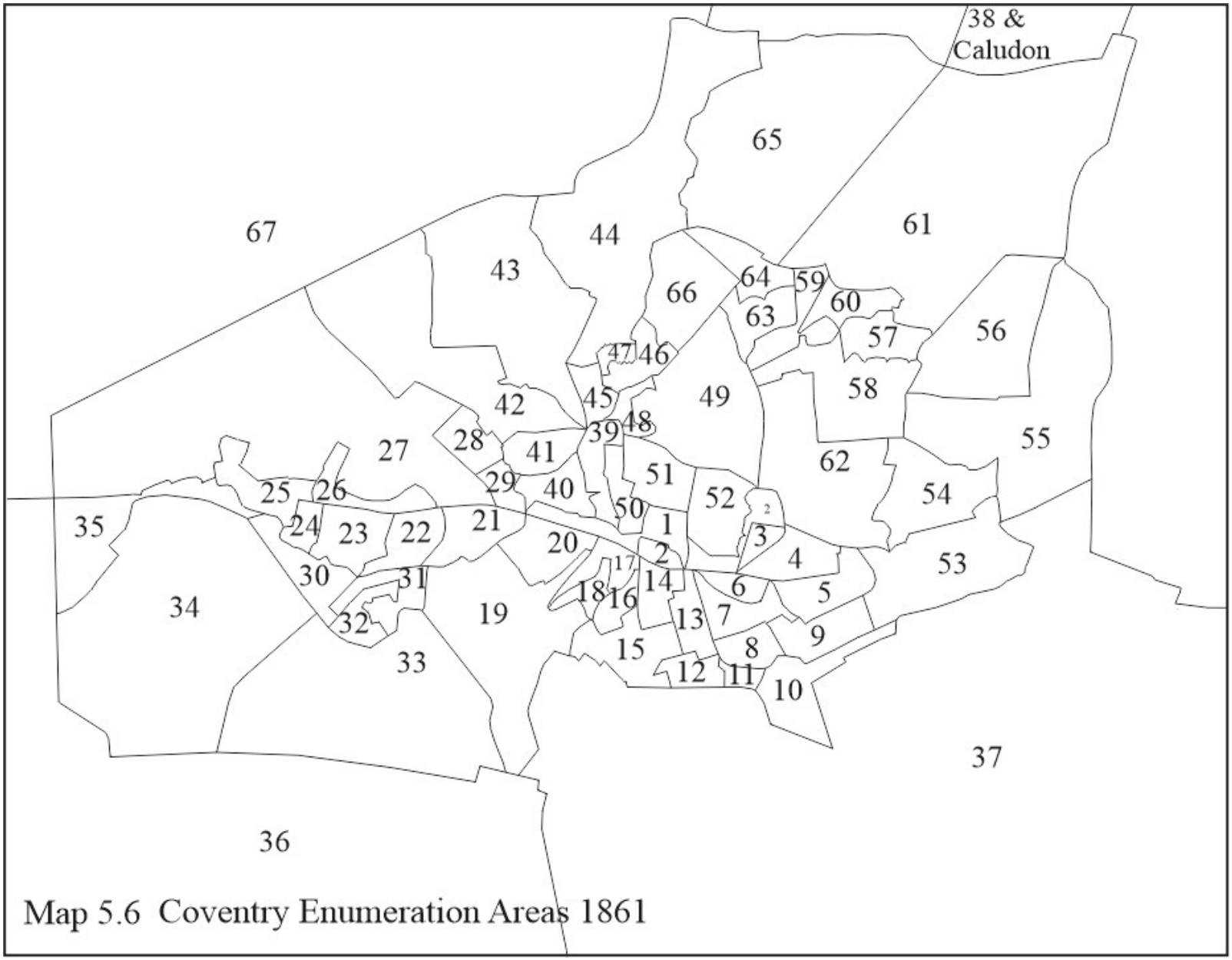
Map 5.3
Irishcom in Enumeration Areas as a percentage of Irishcom in Coventry 1841



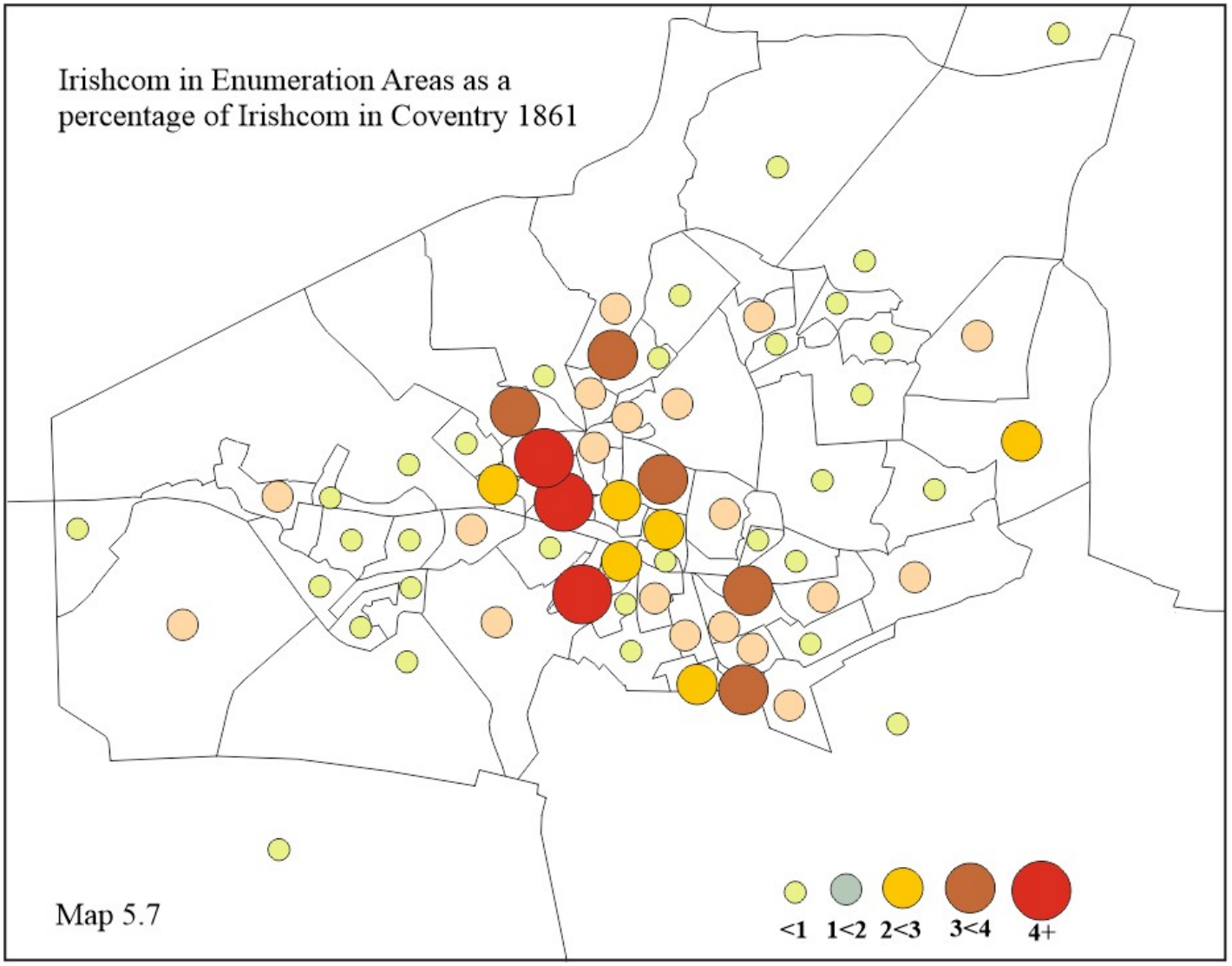
Map 5.4
Location Quotient of Irishcom in
Coventry Enumeration Areas 1841



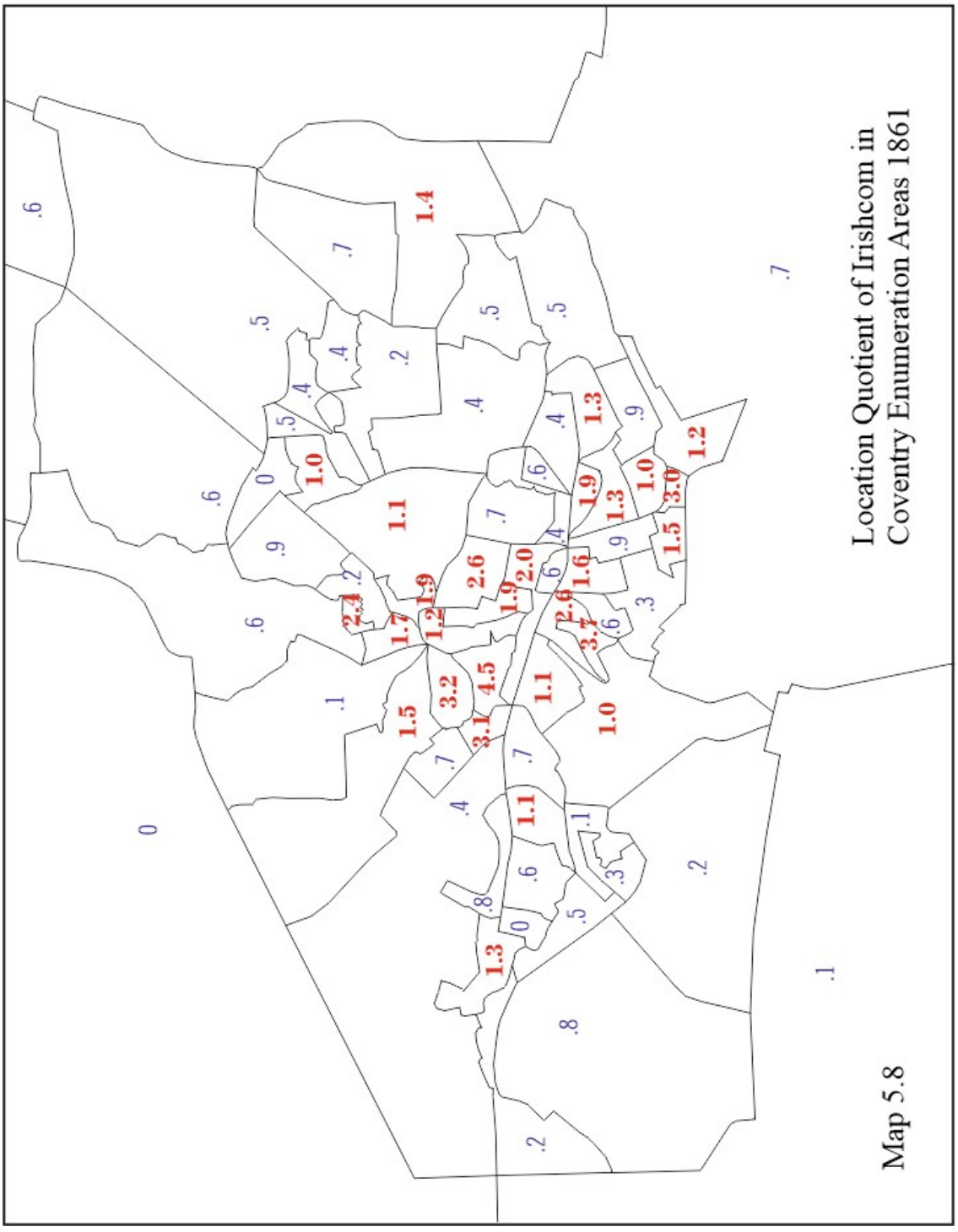
Map 5.5
Coventry Enumeration Areas 1841.
Distribution of married heads of
Irish households by their and
spouse's birthplace



Map 5.6 Coventry Enumeration Areas 1861

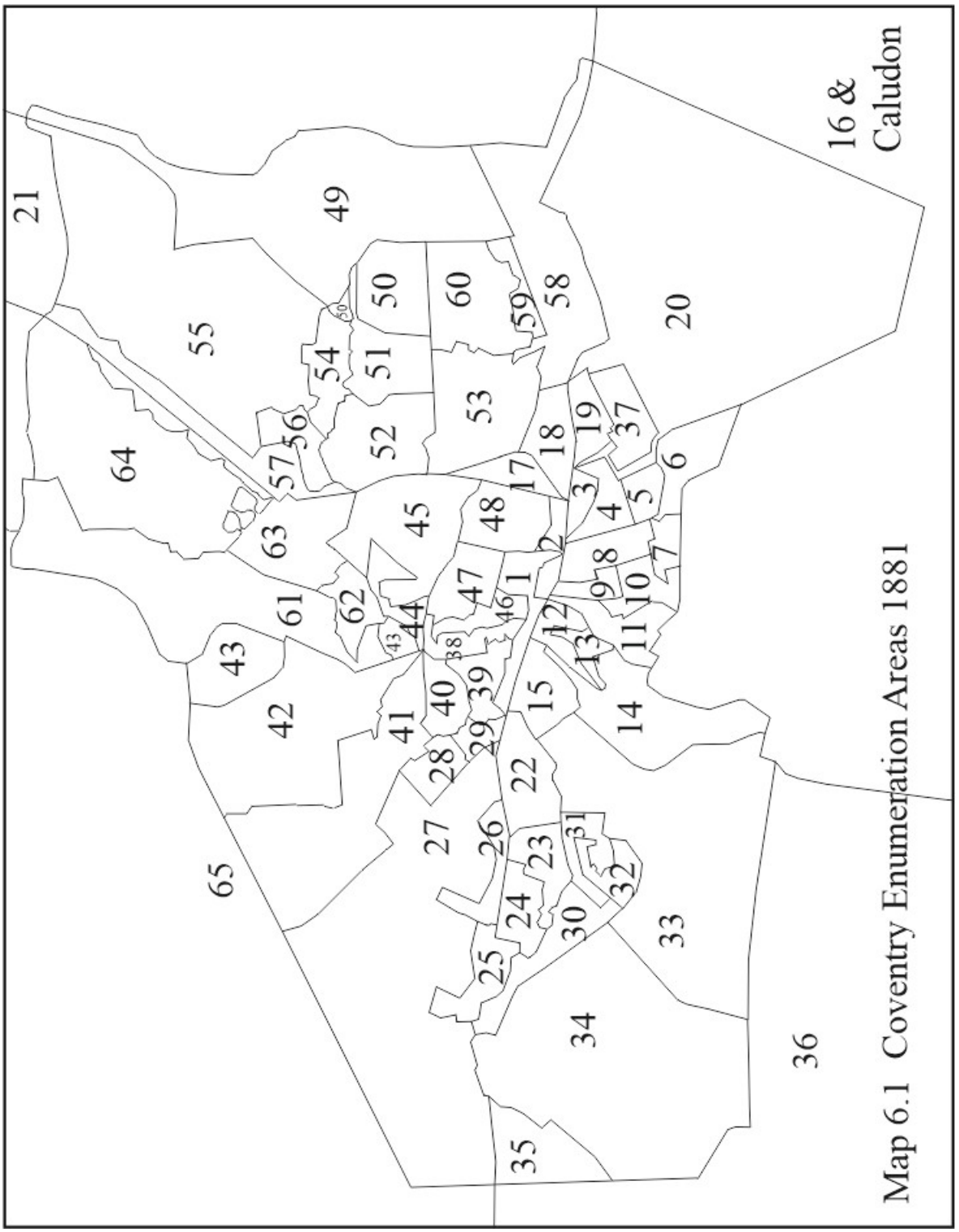

Irishcom in Enumeration Areas as a
percentage of Irishcom in Coventry 1861
<1
1<2
2<3
3<4
4+

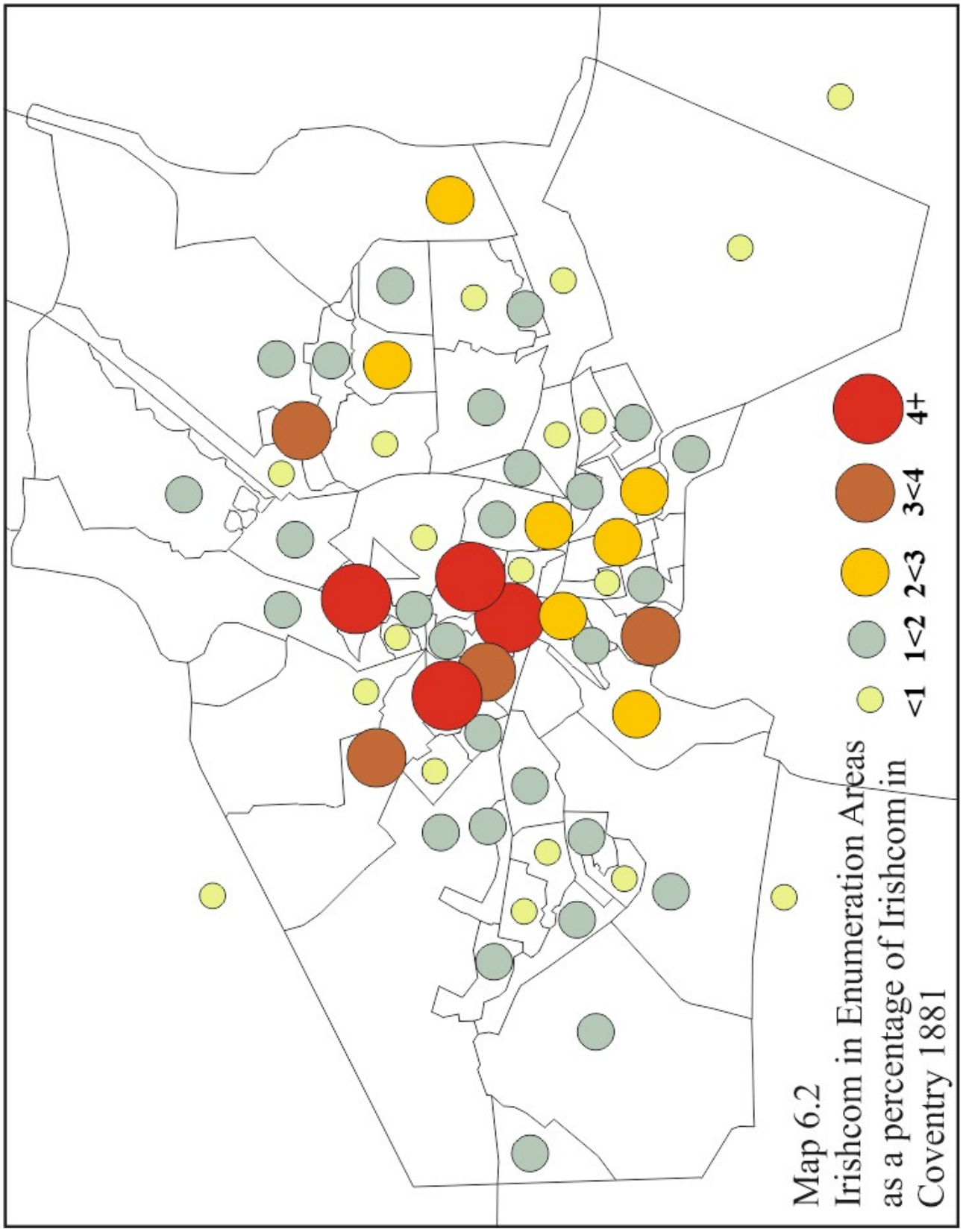
Map 5.7

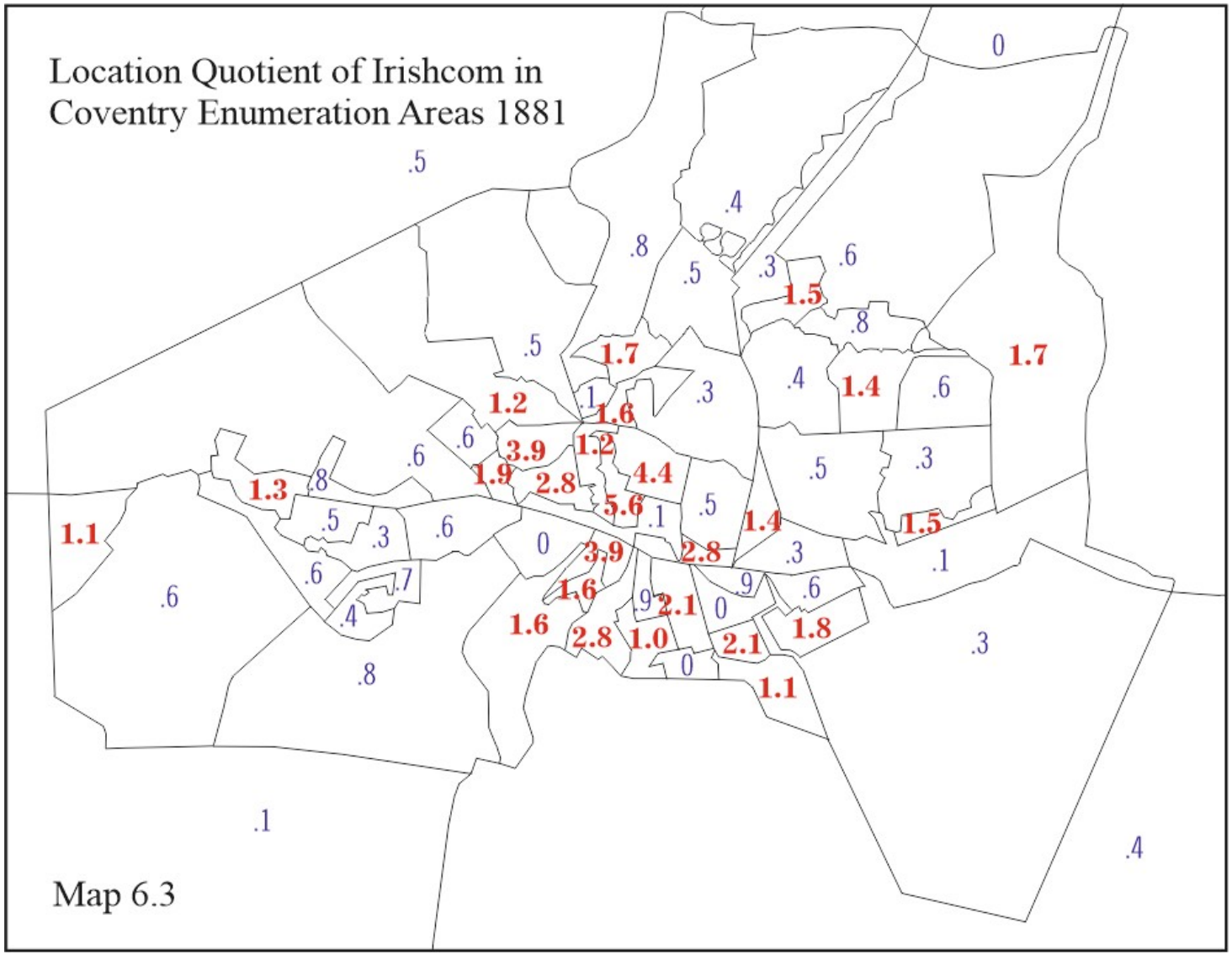

Location Quotient of Irishcom in
Coventry Enumeration Areas 1861

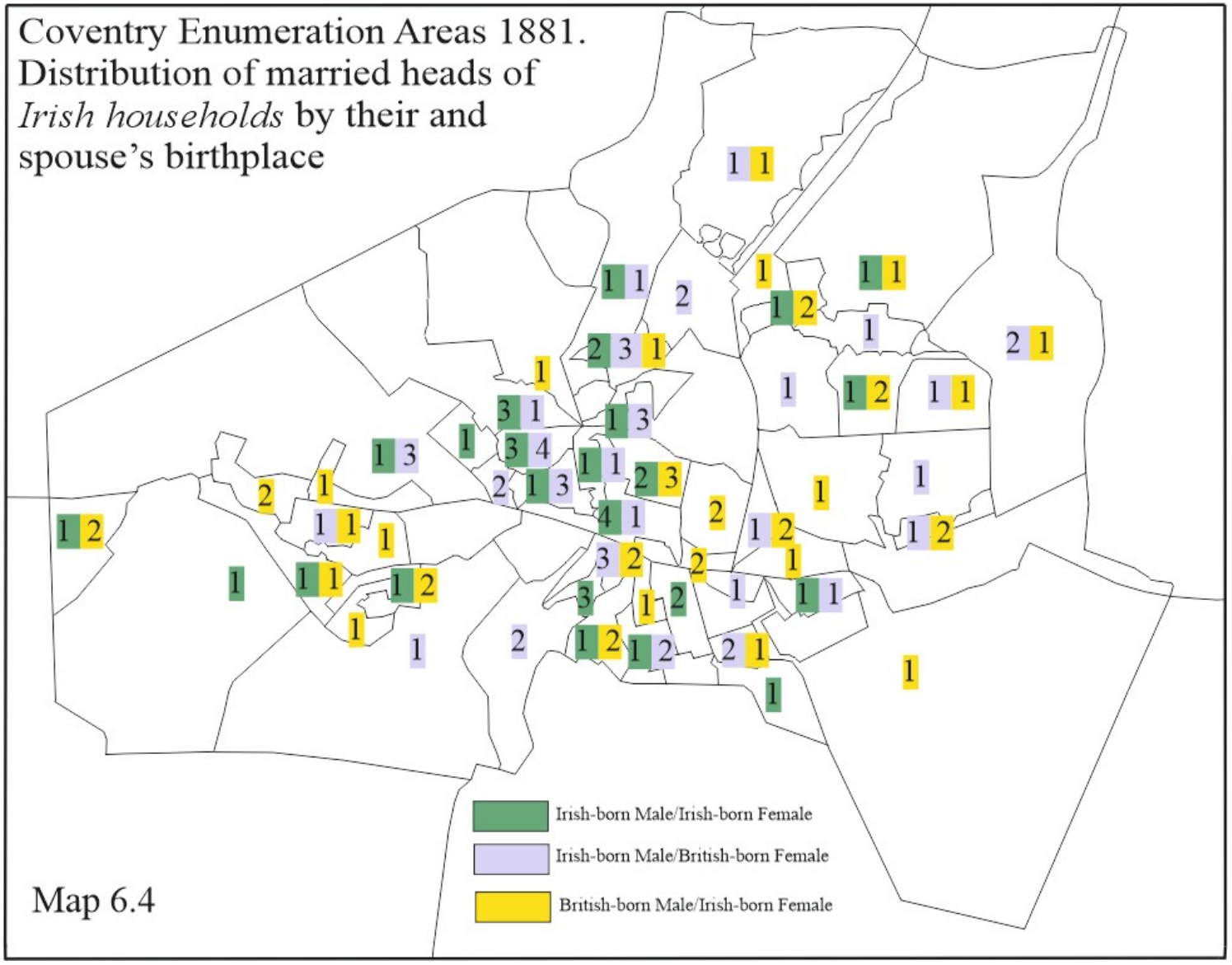
Map 5.8

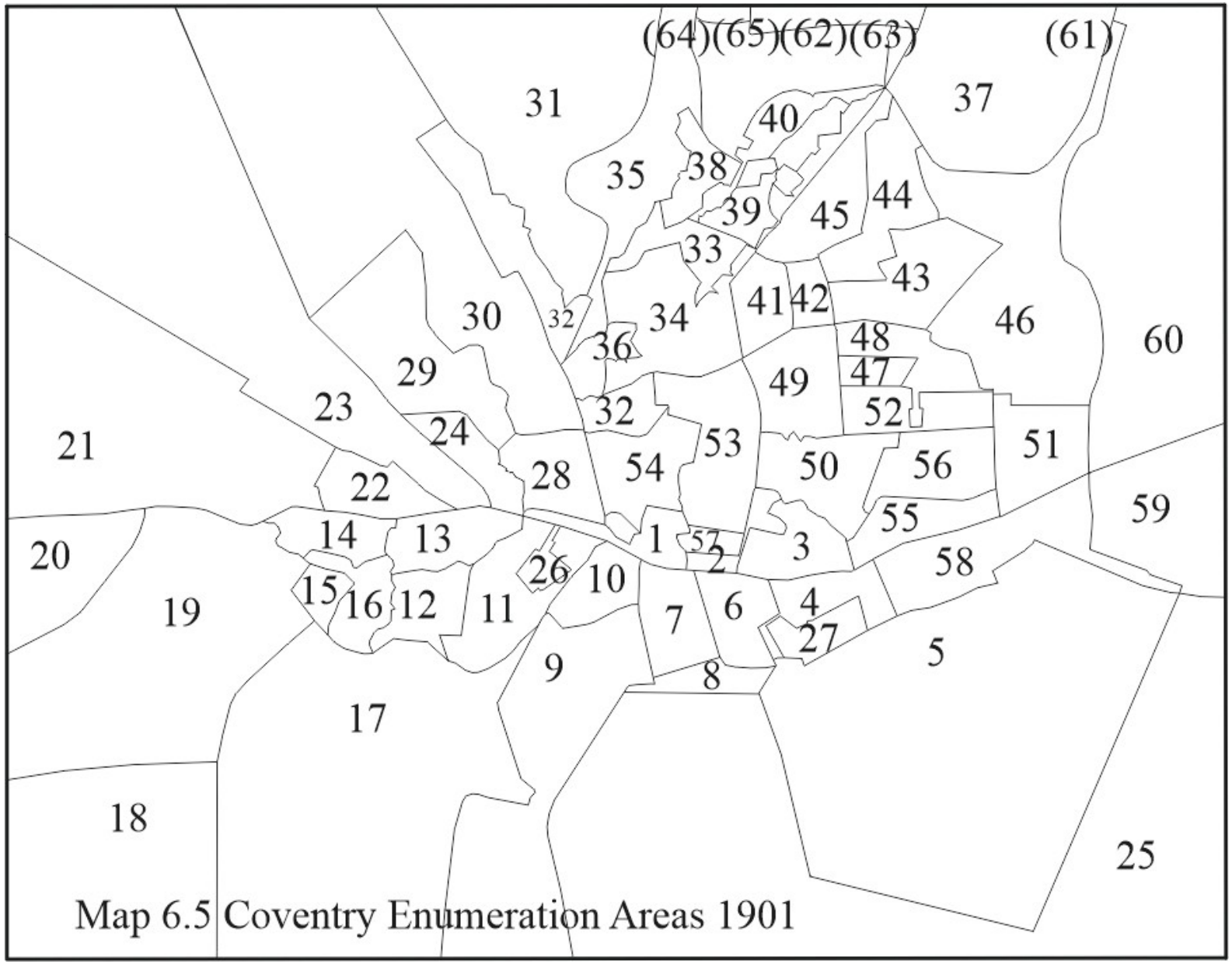
Chapter 6 Maps



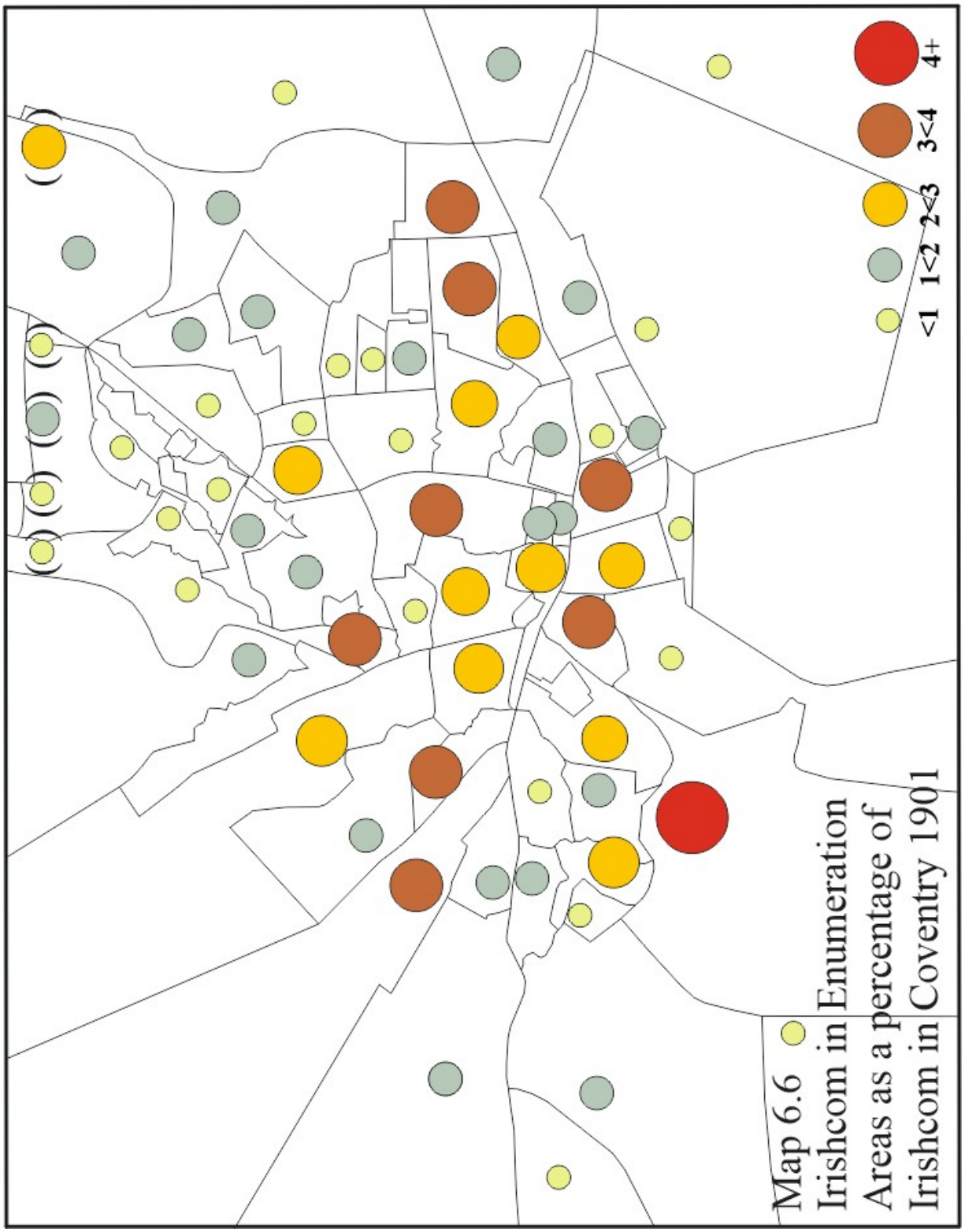

Map 6.2
Irishcom in Enumeration Areas
as a percentage of Irishcom/in
Coventry 1881
<1
1<2
2<3
3<4
4+

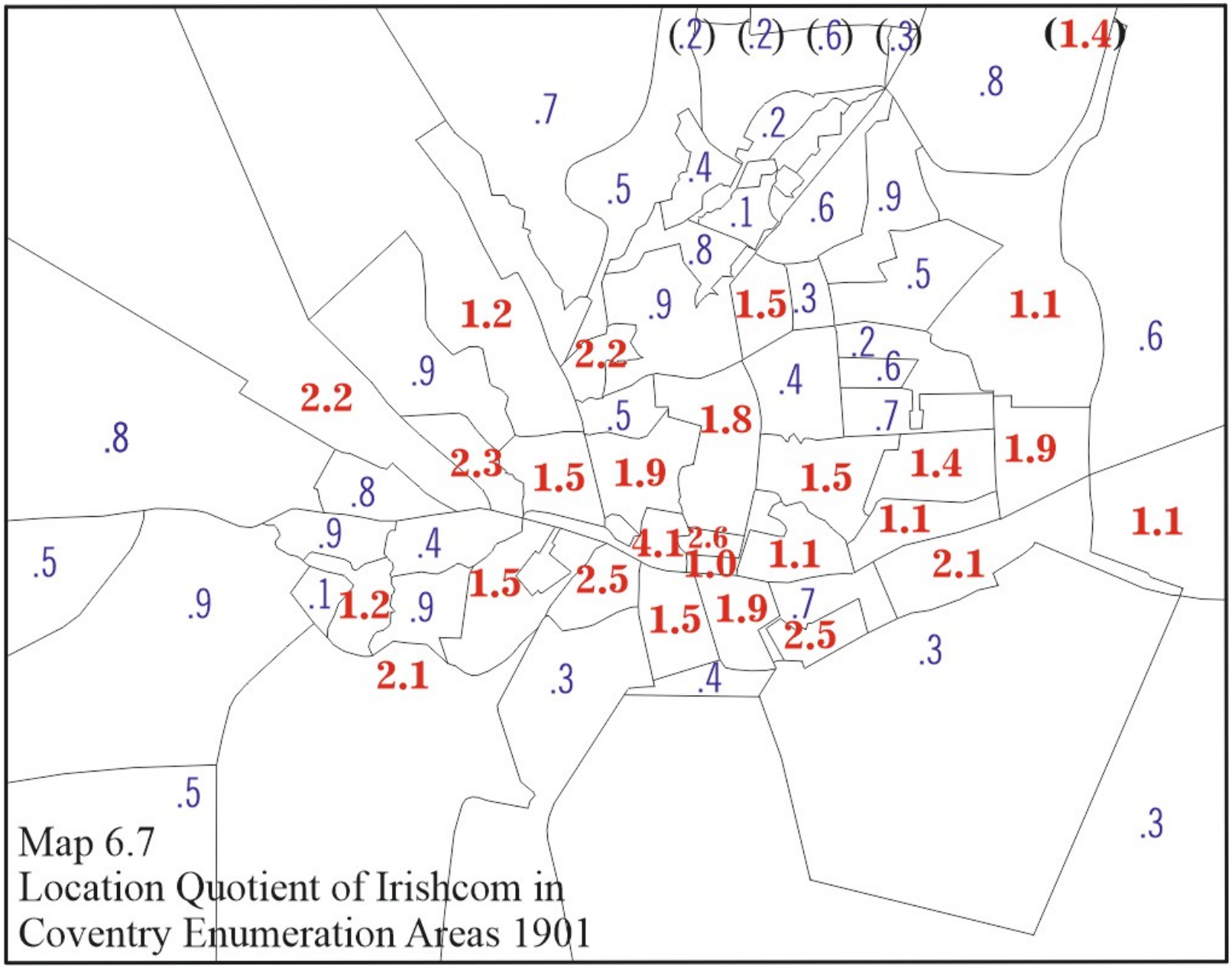

Location Quotient of Irishcom in
Coventry Enumeration Areas 1881
.5
.4
.8
.5
.3
.6
1.5
.8
0
1.7
.5
1.7
.4
1.4
.6
1.2
.1
1.6
.3
.6
.6
3.9
1.2
1.9
2.8
4.4
1.3
.8
.5
5.6
.1
.5
.5
.3
1.1
.5
.3
.6
0
3.9
2.8
1.4
1.5
.3
.1
.6
.6
.7
.9
.6
1.6
.9
2.1
0
.4
1.6
2.8
1.0
2.1
1.8
.3
.8
0
1.1
.1
.4
Map 6.3

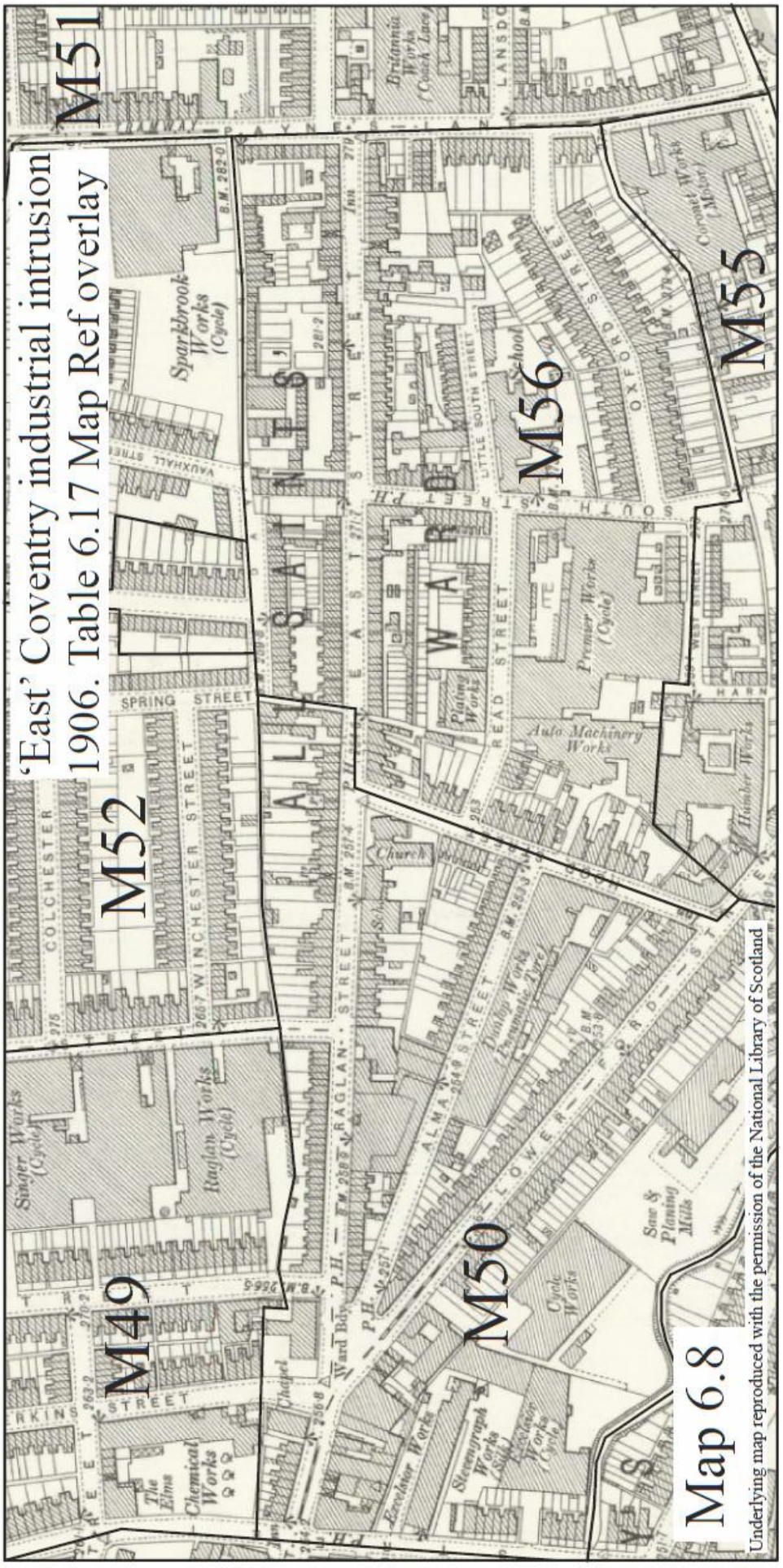

Coventry Enumeration Areas 1881.
Distribution of married heads of
Irish households by their and
spouse's birthplace
Irish-born Male/Irish-born Female
Irish-born Male/British-born Female
British-born Male/Irish-born Female
Map 6.4



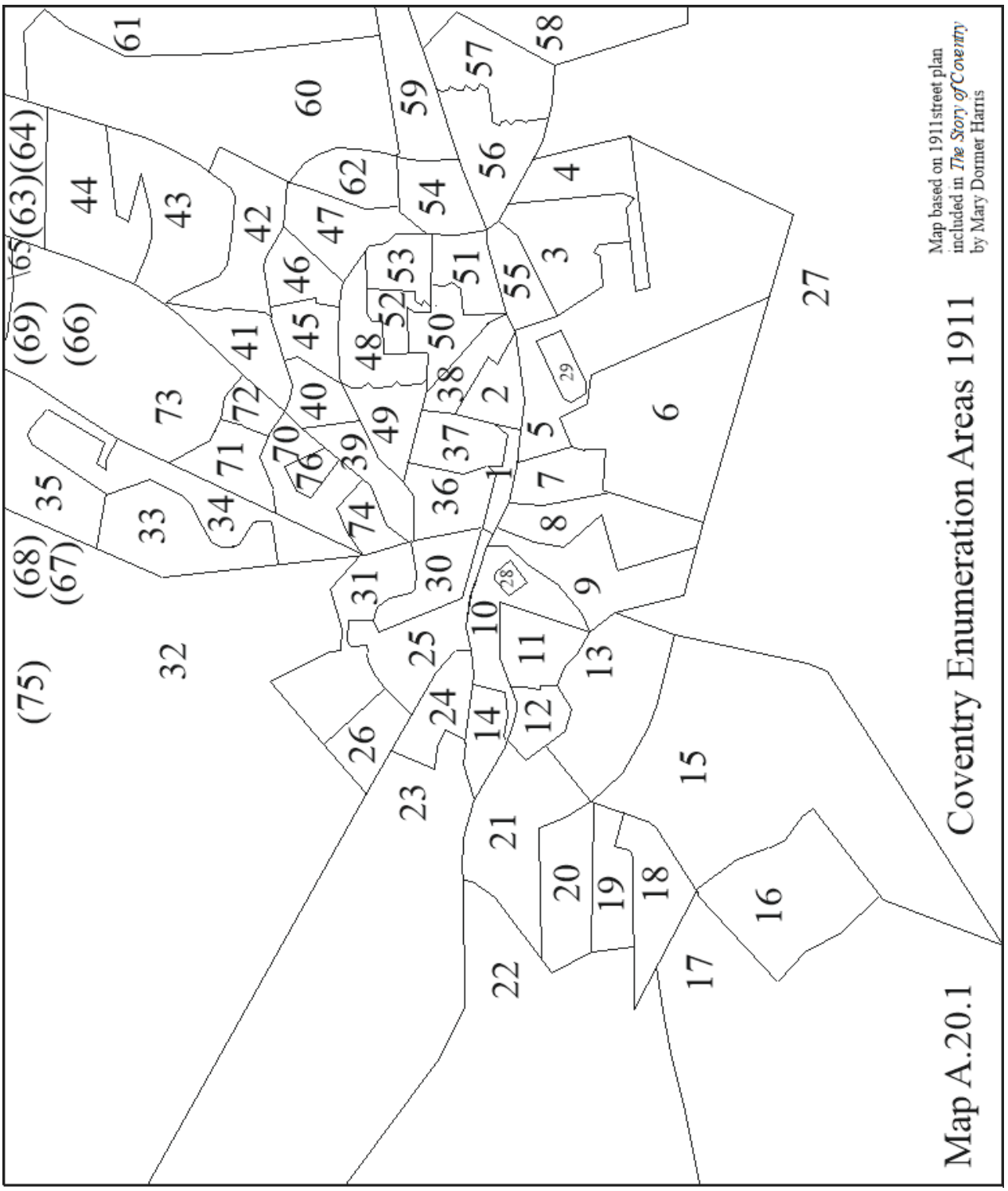
Map 6.5 Coventry Enumeration Areas 1901

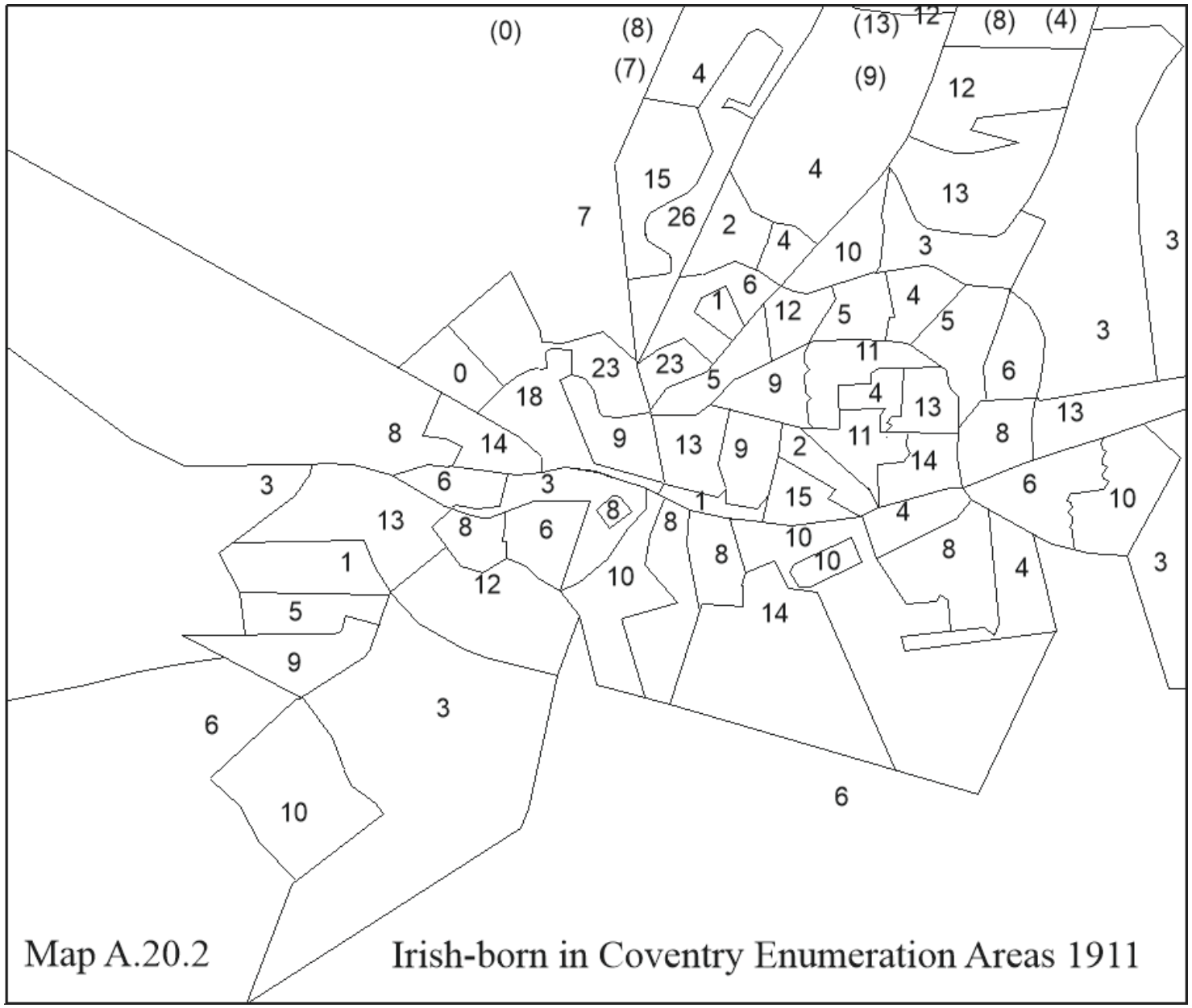

Map 6.6
Irishcom in Enumeration Areas as a percentage of Irishcom in Coventry 1901
<1
1<2
2<3
3<4
4+


(.2) (.2) (.6) (.3) (1.4)
.8
.7
.2
.4
.5
.1
.6
.9
.8
.5
1.1
.6
.9
1.5
.3
1.2
.9
2.2
.2
.6
2.2
.4
.8
.5
1.8
.7
1.9
2.3
1.5
1.9
1.5
1.4
.8
1.1
1.1
.9
.4
4.1
2.6
1.0
1.1
2.1
.5
.9
.1
1.2
.9
1.5
2.5
1.5
1.9
.7
2.5
.3
2.1
.3
.4
.5
.3
Map 6.7
Location Quotient of Irishcom in
Coventry Enumeration Areas 1901


'East' Coventry industrial intrusion
1906. Table 6.17 Map Ref overlay
M49
M50
M51
M52
M55
M56
Map 6.8
Underlying map reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

Appendix 20 Map





Map A.20.2 Irish-born in Coventry Enumeration Areas 1911